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Calvinist Contact

November 20, 1987 / 43rd year of publication / No. 2094

British Evangelical critical of North American churches

Paul De Groot

VANCOUVER, B.C. — It may not have been a good idea for Michael Green to move to earthquake-prone Vancouver. Green, 57, creates tremors wherever he goes.

One of the leaders of the evangelical wing within the Church of England, Green has brought a no-holds-barred, get-off-your-pew activism to Vancouver's Regent College. Regent's status as a pillar of the North American evangelical movement, and Canada's largest theological school will not spare it from Green's sharp tongue.

A high-tension sprite of a man, Green enjoys challenging the conventions of the clerical trade. Those who regard Anglicans as dour are likely to be shocked by a man who throws off his jacket at the end of a speech on behalf of his college and with a twinkle in his eye notes that "students and faculty have no clothes for the winter."

Flamboyant activist

He has published 24 books on evangelism and the Christian faith. Few will win any serious theological awards. They are short tomes with comic-book covers, intended to be devoured in an afternoon by a skeptic or a searcher, rather than digested during reading week in a theological library.

Green is professor of evangelism at Regent and expects his students to use the knowledge they gain when they gain it, not after the semester is over. As a result, students in his class last year were graduating not only with grades, but with converts to their credit.

Drama is a favourite Green technique. He is fond of staging a play in the middle of the street or of a university quadrangle where people cannot help but notice, and ask questions. Then there is the poster, announcing a Green speech to new students, which drew a reprimand from the University of B.C. administration earlier this year: "Success, Money, Sex: What more could a body want? Michael Green, Sunday, 10 a.m."

Churches are dull

Green's restless evangelical energy translates into an impatience with compiacent Canadian churches, whether they are evangelical or main line.

"Jesus is good news. Churches are not," he declared in Edmonton recently.

The North American Christian church is in need of "massive renewal" to carry out its original mandate: bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to a hurting world, Green believes.

Churches put on "a highly predictable show. They are frankly dull. They're the same from one week to another. They're unsuitable for people who don't normally go. They're

Continued on page 3 ...

Thinkbit

Experience is the name everyone gives to his mistakes.

Oscar Wilde

Niagara hearing says NO to free trade

Photo: *The Standard*, St. Catharines, Ont. / Leonard LePage

Members of the Ontario government subcommittee on free trade (l. to r.): William Wrye, Jack Riddell, Monte Kwinter, Jim Bradley.

Bert Witvoet

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — The Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) has gone on record as opposing the free-trade agreement between Canada and the United States. According to Bill Jongejan, CFFO President, "the uniqueness of Canada will suffer under the agreement." He was addressing the Ontario government subcommittee on free trade at their 10th hearing.

Jongejan explained how Canadian agricultural policies have preserved family farming to an extent that U.S. policies have not. Agricultural workers are better paid in Canada with its minimum wage laws, and regional development policies have further strengthened the agricultural sector.

He pointed out that the need to stewardly develop and preserve farmland and other initiatives "involve interventions that are in conflict with the free-trade agreement."

Gloomy forecast

The CFFO, which represents beef, pork, poultry, grain, fruit and vegetable growers, believes that all sectors of the Canadian agricultural sector are threatened by a U.S. farm system that is heavily subsidized and operates in a different social and economic climate.

Once the Canadian dollar rises to the level of the U.S. dollar, and pressures under a free-trade deal would precipitate that, any advantages beef, pork and grain producers have now will be wiped out, Jongejan predicted.

"The grape and wine industries are doomed, just when the tastebuds of our consumers are beginning to appreciate its quality," he added.

Acknowledging some plusses in the agreement, Jongejan did not think that they were significant enough to offset CFFO's concern. He warned the Canadian government not to act out of fear of what Congress may do in the future.

The free-trade agreement trades away natural advantages Canadian farmers have in energy and resources, Jongejan said. Yet, "the principles of free trade should build on natural advantages."

Wrong solution

According to Jongejan, much of the support for free trade with the U.S. "is based on ideology and rhetoric, rather than on a careful examination of how an economy works." It assumes that more trade is the solution to the international crisis in agriculture.

According to CFFO's research, that is not so. Overproduction has to be addressed through supply management, rather than through "cannibalizing foreign markets."

Self-sufficiency of family farms is a much better safeguard against hard

Continued on page 2 ...

Manitoba opens industry, trade office in The Netherlands

(Canadian Scene) — The Manitoba government has established a European trade and investment office based in Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

Anna Maria Magnifico, a native of Winnipeg with extensive business consulting experience in Europe, has been appointed the province's trade and investment representative in Europe. The office commenced operations Sept. 25, 1987.

Magnifico's responsibilities include attracting European investment to Manitoba, increasing entrepreneurial immigration from Europe, identifying export opportunities for Manitoba companies and enhancing overall commercial ties between Europe and Manitoba.

Investment funds from Europe into Canada to establish new enterprises have been significant, totalling $650 million from July 1985 to March 1987. While Manitoba has received only a modest share of these funds, the goal of the European office is to gain $1 million of investment for Manitoba in its first full year of operations, officials say.

The Rotterdam post is Manitoba's second international representative office; the province established a Hong Kong office in 1985. To date, $14 million in investment and 300 jobs have been created in Manitoba through Hong Kong business interests.

In this issue:

Photo: Bert Witvoet

Participants at the Holy Spirit Conference in Ancaster

Adrian Peetoom begins his column p.8
Ron Rupke concludes "After the conversion" p.12
A charismatic and non-charismatic review the Holy Spirit Conference pp.9-12

News

Niagara hearing says NO to free trade

... continued from page 1.

times. The "more trade" philosophy "should not be allowed to set the future direction for our economy," said Jongejan.

Playing field not level

The CFFO presentation was followed by a brief with a similar message from the Preservation of Agricultural Land Society (PALS). In line with their concern for the preservation of a six per cent foodland base, representative James Hostler warned against the temptation to trade away short-term advantages for long-term problems.

Tariffs are needed to protect our farmers against U.S. farmers who benefit from hidden subsidies. "Our farmers are not afraid to compete if there was a level playing field," he said. But subsidized power and water rates, lower fertilizer and pesticide costs as well as lower wages make it that the playing field is not level. "If there is to be a free-trade agreement, then the hidden subsidies must go and the wages must rise."

He warned that local self-sufficiency in food, which is vital to any economy, will disappear.

Hostler predicted that the upshot of this free-trade deal will be: a less varied economic base, a much diminished social program, exhausted non-renewable resources, a lower standard of living and no future."

"Our cities are regarded with awe by people from the U.S.," he added. "Let's not adopt the U.S. example of ghettoes with unemployed people and poor social services."

Of the 18 groups and individuals who appeared before the committee, only one spoke in favour of the free-trade agreement — The Polysar Ltd. company, representing the petro-chemical industry.

According to Lena Byl of Niagara-on-the-Lake, who attended the meeting and was gracious enough to supply her audio tapes of the proceedings to *Calvinist Contact*, the Polysar representative had a hard time defending his position during questioning.

As far as the Niagara hearings were concerned, free trade is a bad deal for Canada. It is not a matter of dollars and cents, Bill Jongejan had said, but the Canadian way of life is at stake.

Ombudsman exists for ethnic communities

Marian Van Til

OTTAWA — With the appointment of Ed Harrington as a special investigator working primarily with "ethno cultural communities," Ontario's Office of the Ombudsman wants to make itself better known and better understood, says a report in *Canadian Scene.*

Ombudsman Daniel G. Hill recently announced Harrington's appointment. Harrington, a former star player with the Toronto Argonauts football club, has been with the Ombudsman's office for 10 years. However, his new job demonstrates a shift in emphasis in the office. The job will involve "a significant amount of community outreach work to promote understanding of the Ombudsman's office" and to "especially encourage use of its service for those Ontarians who are members of the ethnic and visible minority communities."

Harrington will serve as primary contact for these groups and arrange meetings between Ombudsman Hill and the groups' representatives.

Harrington will be part of an extensive campaign to inform Ontarians about the services available to them via the Ombudsman's office. The office sees Harrington's new job as "the first step in a concerted effort to ensure that ethno-cultural issues are being dealt with sensitively and appropriately."

Ombudsman Hill waxes poetic when commenting on the scope of the Ombudsman's office. He says there are four trilliums included in the symbol of his office (the trillium is Ontario's official flower). One represents his "commitment of service to anglophone Ontarians, one to francophone Ontarians, one to Native peoples, and one to all other Ontarians.

Hill says Harrington's special investigative work with ethnic communities will help him "meet that commitment and to keep [his] promise that [his] office will be accessible to all Ontarians."

When *Calvinist Contact* called the Ombudsman's office, no one was available to answer our questions. The unidentified woman we were put through to via the receptionist would not venture to give specifics about what either Hill or Harrington actually do to help "ethno cultural communities."

Why not place a personal greeting in our Christmas issue. See page 17 for details.

The crooked, straight

Wrong rep, right org

In my response to Joanne Lips' letter last week I mentioned that Joanne was reappointed to her position as representative to Project North for the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. This was not so. At her request, Ms. Lips was not reappointed, and Rev. Bert Slofstra was asked to take her place.

Pastor C.A. does not live in Vineland

Carl Schouls, pastor of the Free Reformed Church of Vineland, Ont., asked us to rescue him from a mistaken association with an article that appeared in C.C., Sept. 18, entitled "Do not despise the thunder." The author of that article was Pastor C.A. from Reformelo, Ont.

Some of Schouls' parisioners, knowing that their pastor sometimes engages in tongue-in-cheek style, suspected that C.A. was a pseudonym for Carl A. Schouls. (Since when is Vineland called Reformelo?)

We hereby assure Schoul's people that the tongue of "Do not despise the thunder" was not in Schouls' cheek, and that their pastor may well "thunder" next Sunday.

Front page by heresy distressed

We had it right when we entitled Bert Rhebergen's article "Astronomy findings and simple faith can coexist." (Oct. 30) But on the front page we announced the article in the "In this issue" box as "A layman shows how *astrology* [italics added] and faith can mix." Whoa, that's a heresy on the day before Reformation Day, and a Freudian slip on the day before Halloween.

Astrology and faith do not mix. Astrology is a pseudo-science, that interprets the supposed influence of the stars and planets on persons and events. Astronomy is a science, that seeks to explain the composition, motions, positions, distances and sizes of the stars and planets.

You can't be a Christian astrologist anymore than you can run a house of ill repute on Reformed principles.

BW

DE RICHTLIJN VOOR HUURSVERHOGING VOOR 1988 IS 4.7 PROCENT.

De richtlijn voor huursverhoging voor volgend jaar is gesteld op 4.7 procent. Dit is het maximum percentage, waar een huisbaas de huur van een woning of flat in 1988, mee mag laten stijgen, zonder daar eerst toestemming van het Ministry of Housing voor te hebben. De huur voor een woning of flat kan maar één keer in een 12-maandelijkse periode verhoogd worden.

De richtlijn van 4.7 procent geldt voor alle particuliere huurflats en huurwoningen in de provincie, die voor huursverhoging tussen 1 Januari, 1988 en 31 December 1988 in aanmerking komen.

De richtlijn voor 1987 van 5.2 procent blijft gelden voor huursverhogingen die nog moeten plaatsvinden tot en met 31 December 1987.

Het is tegen de wet voor een huisbaas om de huur met meer dan het maximale percentage te verhogen, zonder daar eerst toestemming voor gevraagd te hebben aan het Ministry of Housing. In gevallen waarbij een huisbaas een verzoek indient om boven de richtlijn te gaan, kunnen bewoners een afschrift vragen van dit verzoek, en hun eigen mening uiten voordat er een beslissing genomen wordt.

Voor verdere informatie over de richtlijn van 1988, kunt u uw locale Rent Review Office benaderen, welke vermeldt staan in de blauwe bladzijden van uw telefoonboek onder de regering van Ontario, Ministry of Housing. Voor lange afstands gesprekken vraag de operator om ZENITH 96000.

Inwoners van Toronto, en directe omgeving, kunnen ook hun RENT REVIEW INFORMATION CENTRE bellen op 585-2838.

Ontario Minister of Housing Hon. Chaviva Hosek

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Pensive Dutchie

Syrt Wolters

How Confused Can We Get?

If the Christian community has lost its vision about what it means to be "in the world" and not "of" the world, it is no wonder that it gets confused when confronted with reality. This became clear from a bulletin of one of the Christian Reformed Churches in B.C., which was sent to me. In that bulletin the "Council report" says:

"... Council brought to a close what may seem for some hours of deliberations and debate on the sensitive issue of "church involvement in politics."

The report on political involvement by the church dealt with the Christian Reformed position of support to our elected government officials, without promoting political parties or becoming active in the promotion of these parties.

The following motion was approved as being the position adopted by our church pertaining to these issues:

At ... church we encourage followers of Christ, on a personal level, to apply God's Word to all aspects of life and to be ready to take a stand on emerging issues, promoting biblical answers to specific concerns.

At ... church we will be careful, on a collective level, not to support any one political party in our official communications, both written and verbal. We will continue to support, by way of prayer and encouragement, elected members of our government, especially those who seek to further God's Kingdom in the political arena.

I was informed that this church had turned down a request to have an announcement included in its bulletin about a meeting of the Christian Heritage Party of Canada. What do you think of the position of this church? What, in fact, is the situation?

Who's breaking away?

There has been a genuine attempt by committed Christians in the Christian Heritage Party of Canada to break away from secular humanism in politics, and let God's Word speak, not only to "emerging issues" but to the fundamental political issues from a biblical perspective. It could be called "political communion of saints." But this particular congregation officially says to its members: Don't identify yourself with this "political communion of saints," because it is a party, you know, and we don't meddle with political parties! What we do is pray for and encourage those Christians who have become elected members of the government by identifying themselves with a non-Christian party!

On a "personal level" the members are encouraged to support those Christians, who have gone into politics on the terms of political parties which do not care about the Kingship of Christ in politics!

Collectively, i.e., as a *communion of saints,* the members of this church are warned not to identify themselves with a *political* communion of saints!

Indeed, if the Christian community loses its vision, it gets confused when confronted with reality and it takes "hours of endless debate" to arrive at the wrong conclusion!

This church is suggesting two modes of conduct for its members: one for individuals and one for the "communion." Individually the members are encouraged to pray for and encourage those Christian politicians who decided to go the secular road in politics; communally they will stay away from any concerned effort by Christians to get away from secularism in politics!

Of course, as persons we should apply God's Word to all aspects of life and be ready to take a stand on "emerging issues." But if the "world" would trace the roots of these Christians, shouldn't it be compelled to discover that the basis of all their activities is "communion of saints" empowered by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit who teaches the body of believers to find biblical answers to fundamental questions of life, including political life?

The ugly truth is though, that the world won't be able to find a root common to the Christian community's activities. It finds that many Christians are more confused than the "world" is. Some Christians vote NDP, some Liberal, some Conservative. Though they are all "witnessing" for Christ in their respective secular corners, they are creating a cacophony through which nobody can detect the Christian mind in politics.

Yes, Harry Blamires was right when he wrote some 25 years ago:

There is no longer a Christian mind. There is still, of course, a Christian ethic, a Christian practice, and a Christian spirituality. As a moral being, the modern Christian subscribes to a code other than that of the non-Christian. As a member of the church, he undertakes obligations and observations ignored by the non-Christian. But, as a thinking being, the modern Christian has succumbed to secularization. He accepts religion, its worship, its spiritual culture, but he rejects the religious view of life, the view which sets all earthly issues within the context of the eternal, the view which relates all human problems — social, political, cultural — to the doctrinal foundations of the Christian faith, the view which sees all things here below in terms of God's supremacy, in terms of heaven and hell."

Syrt Wolters is a semi-retired barber living in Victoria, British Columbia.

British Evangelical critical of North American churches

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dominated by a clergyman and a choir. Members come and go and sit down and stand up and sing a hymn without affecting their minds, and then sit down."

Jesus, a radical

Green is strongly critical of the alliance between evangelical Christians and political conservatives.

"We must renounce conservatism and respectability. There's this astonishing myth that if you are conservative on the Bible, you are conservative on everything else. Bible-believing people vote Republican without thinking.

"If you really believe the Bible is decisive, you are radical on everything else. Jesus was a flaming radical who was hounded to death by the establishment."

One may be Christian and politically conservative, but such a stance should reflect intelligent and diligent wrestling with scripture rather than automatic acceptance of the conservative agenda, Green says.

North American Christians are part of the establishment, and enjoy the lifestyle their society affords them, he charges.

The Bible calls for Christians to live simply, but "the greatest sinners against a Christian lifestyle are North American Christians."

"If you follow a crucified messiah, you will not have a Palm Beach kind of lifestyle."

Churches to serve

Above all, the church does not exist to serve its clergy or even its members.

"God sent the church as the only society in the world that exists for the benefit of non-members. Who would guess that, looking around today?"

Green is on a roll, and cries of "uncle" do not dissuade him.

"Most churches are not worth joining," he says flatly.

Furthermore, if they were to close down, it wouldn't make a great deal of difference to most non-members.

"If your church went out of business tomorrow, would it matter to anyone?" he asks his audience.

It would, if a church was known for caring for the poor, reading to the blind, caring for the down and out, and showing compassion and concern for the outsider.

Everyone involved

Green is not without some solutions to the malaise of North American Christianity. He's a fan of the "house-church" concept, in which a large church is broken down into small groups which meet regularly. People don't get much out of a group larger than 100, he says.

Churches must "reject one-man ministry," he adds.

"You cannot be a Christian without being in ministry," and the job of clergy is to train Christians to be effective evangelists of the gospel and effective dispensers of Christian love in the secular world.

And he means secular. He has been known to wander into bars and start debates on religious subjects.

"I've seen people accept Christ while sitting on a bar stool."

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Editorial

Strong houses need good foundations

Principled thinking is a valuable commodity. Having it is like possessing a road map for your journey.

Yet, it is strange how in matters of human living many people think they can do without a road map. That may be because they think they can easily substitute other things for principled thinking, or they don't trust principles at all. Some people have tremendous faith in what they call common sense, business sense, intuition, or reasoning ability. Such faith in otherwise useful functions moves people away from principled thinking.

There may be other factors. People have in the past promoted principles that were not principles, or that were not good principles. Also, good principles have been held wrongly, as if all there is to life is espousing principles. (A proper use of good principles always entails the full use of human faculties. Principles by themselves cannot do the job.)

But a more common reason is perhaps the fact that human beings find principles confining. They don't want to be limited or bound by things they cannot control. Hence, principles are not in vogue at a time when "freedom" is uppermost in people's minds.

In order to trust good principles, one has to trust the underlying patterns of this world. One has to believe that this world hangs together and can ultimately be traced back to a unified source. And one has to be willing to pursue the good purposes of life in this world and trust that by doing so there will be good results.

What I have been describing so far is very difficult to disentangle from our understanding of the Christian faith and our appreciation for the law of God. But we must realize that one need not be a Christian to uphold the value of principled thinking. Other faiths too can promote principled thinking and living.

A narrowing focus

Why this abstract rumination over principles?

A few weeks ago Outreach Niagara, a St. Catharines-based volunteer organization that seeks to make a Christian witness through service in the community, held a brainstorming session for its members. The idea was to rethink what the organization has been doing and to help forge new ideas for future projects. So far Outreach Niagara has been rather successful in, among other things, publishing *Channel* magazine (distributed free of charge throughout the region), in starting the Bethlehem Project (a housing complex for needy families), in operating co-op housing and providing a speaker's bureau.

As participants sat down to reflect on what Outreach Niagara has done and should do, it occurred to them that throughout the years there has been a shift from hard principled thinking on matters such as politics and education to an emphasis on caring and sharing. It was felt that this shift had occurred because the times were changing, and you can't always keep on talking and writing. A time for action has to come.

Someone said that in the '60s people studied philosophy because they wanted to change the universe, in the '70s they studied sociology because they wanted to change society, and in the '80s they study psychology because they want to change themselves.

The change of focus reveals a narrowing that is on the one hand good and probably necessary, on the other hand disturbing. The fact is that a civilization needs to do all these things simultaneously. An organization like Outreach Niagara has to continue promoting principled thinking.

Selling our birthright?

And then there is the free trade debate. Apart from the fact that hard-nosed facts about the agreement are hard to come by, there is very little principled thinking and discussing going on about this important development in economic and social life in Canada. Is it right to protect the beer industry with its strong lobby in Ottawa and to sacrifice the wine industry? Is it right for a nation to surrender its right to stewardly dispense its water and energy sources?

Is Pierre Berton hitting the mark when he says that Canada is selling its cultural birthright for a mess of economic pottage? That is a principled question which Esau should have looked into when he was hungry and caring only for the needs of the moment.

Principles are first things. According to a dictionary, they are truths that serve as foundations for other truths. As such they have priority over the rest of life. Throughout the ages, principles suffer from the tyranny of the urgent, from pressure points that parade as being first, but which should be last.

Let's continue to promote foundational thinking. The pursuit of principles may make us miss glamorous opportunities, but in the long run it saves us from making colossal mistakes.

BW

Women are not an economic class

The Ontario Women's Directorate, a provincial government branch, sent out a press release by special courier to various newspapers. The release detailed the damage that a free-trade agreement may have on many working women.

Women could be more adversely affected than men by a free-trade agreement, says the release, because 44 per cent of women's manufacturing jobs are in the most high risk industries compared to 28 per cent of men.

What is difficult to grasp about this news release is why the classifications are significant. Women do not form an economic or social unit. Why distinguish between them and male workers?

The fact that a high percentage of workers may suffer from a free trade deal is very significant and troublesome. The fact that most of them are women should be irrelevant.

What would be significant is to know whether a high percentage of those in danger of losing their job are sole wage earners or single parents. That would give the public an indication of the kind of hardship experienced from a loss of employment.

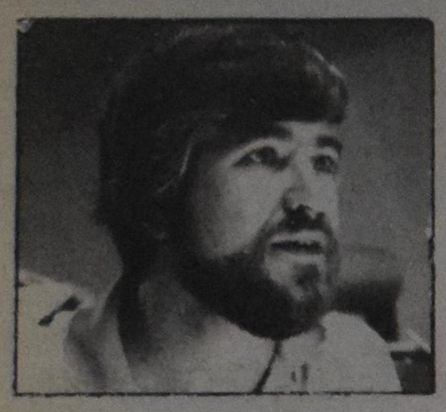
What is also significant is that many of the workers in sensitive industries are low-skilled workers, recent or older immigrants with limited English language skills and little education. That is an important indicator of hardship.

It is one of the signs of our times that women are often portrayed as a class of human beings. That may be a reaction to past and present injust systems which treated women as a lower economic class without identifying them as such. But such mirror reactions carry a price. A similar scenario saw Marxism make a class out of workers, with all its devastating results.

Singling out women as an economic group may be an effective political ploy; it does precious little to remind us that, also in the issue of free trade, we are first of all dealing with humanity.

BW

JUST A MOMENT/HERMAN PRAAMSMA



"With mere good intentions, hell is proverbially paved." (William James, *Psychology*, Chap. 10)

One of the easiest and cheapest things in the world is having good intentions. They literally cost you nothing. They can simply well-up out of your heart or conscience at a moment's notice: "I really should go and see Aunt Hilda; the poor dear is so alone since Uncle Ralph died!" or: "I am going on a diet — soon!"

Not only are good intentions easy and cheap, but they have the power of making you feel absolutely virtuous for at least 10 minutes. There is the quiet afterglow of having thought and said the Right Thing. For good intentions are indeed things that are *good*. If everyone in the world would follow up on them, what a fine place this globe would be."

There is, of course, also a dark side to this picture. There is nothing like good intentions not kept to make you feel small or depressed. When people ask you, "Did you take along the material you promised me so generously last month?" Or when you attend Aunt Hilda's funeral, trying hard to remember what she looked like. If only I had done this or that, how good I would feel; but I didn't — and I don't.

The Bible has some famous examples of good intentions. Perhaps the most famous one is from the book of Genesis, where Reuben forms the good intention to save his little brother Joseph by having him thrown in a pit rather than letting him be killed.

Unfortunately, his good intentions remained only that, for he arrived at the pit much too late, and Joseph had already been sold into slavery. All Reuben could do is wail, "The boy is not there! Where can I go now? (to hide my shame)?"

You know, all people suffer from good intentions. To know what is right and not to do it, is that not the curse of many? Actually, that's a pretty good definition of sin. And who is without sin? God knows the thoughts and intentions of the heart, says scripture (Heb. 4:12). And who can stand before him?

When it comes right down to it, we need help to begin to turn our good intentions into good deeds again — the help of God, whose words and deeds are one. That help is sought in prayer. May the Lord turn your good intentions into good deeds — today.

Herman Praamsma is pastor of the Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Rexdale, Ontario.

Longer Letter

A cry for the Christian Heritage Party of Canada

Will what I've been waiting for, the 37 years I've been in Canada, be realized? Our community has missed out on the things my generation was taught about Christian organizations: to obey the voice of God in politics.

May I tell you about some of my experiences while promoting The Christian Heritage Party? The need for more members where I live was quite urgent in order to get a representative. I started phoning, first my old friends of about the same age, around 70. I was so thankful no one said no. It seems to me they were all waiting for someone to ask them to become a member of that long overdue Christian party.

Old and young

After an inspiring meeting of the party in my area, those who attended were convinced more members had to be added. So I started phoning again, this time the younger generation who are still actively working in a booming economy. But what a disappointment: no one said yes. I thought I'd have to quit. Maybe my age is a hindrance for the younger ones, or perhaps the "old-fashioned" idea that God must be honoured and obeyed in "kerk, staat and maatschappij." ("church, state and society")

Does the younger generation live too much by bread alone, not worrying much about the spiritual and moral decay in our society today? This is not a statement, but a question which shows that I am scared. I asked myself: who will awaken the older ones, and who will warn the younger ones who missed so much of this kind of spiritual education?

The role of ministers

I thought, why not write a few ministers about it? As shepherds they should guide God's people through the spiritual and moral wilderness of today.

I asked the leader of the Christian Heritage Party, what is the attitude of ministers in general? He said, "so, so." Do ministers recognize how, humanly speaking, they can make a great difference in the growth of the party if they would take a stand for the good? If this is a true picture, if the shepherd is not publicly taking a clear stand, where will the congregation go if their conscience bothers them as they think about the next election?

Still time

While there is such a great opportunity to work and to vote for a solidly Christian party, it is a sad situation, is it not, if we see how committed Christians have to work so hard to get even 100 members in my area of Elgin County, where there may be over 100 churches.

For whom are you planning to work and vote in the next election? What will your advice be, parents, to your children? Ministers, what will be your advice to the congregations? For only $20 per three-year term, you get all the information you want in a publication of the Christian Heritage Party. Will you prayerfully think about this God-given option?

P. Vandenberg,
St. Thomas, Ontario

Letters

Coldness no discerner of churches

During the summer Alice Los offered the readers her "Confessions of a house-bound vacationer." In it she confided that one Sunday found her and her husband in a Presbyterian church.

As a Presbyterian reader I was pleased to see her report that at the exit the minister was kind; I was distressed that the worshippers could not be bothered with strangers. But I was left wondering why Mrs. Los found it necessary to identify the offending worshippers as Presbyterians.

Lest anyone felt inspired to send up a quickie "I thank you, Lord, that I am not like those ..." let me share a personal experience.

Some 30 years ago my family and I arrived in Montreal where we joined the Christian Reformed Church. We were welcomed heartily. It was a very young church in those days and most members were recent immigrants. We all struggled with the same trials and tribulations.

Two years later we moved to Saskatchewan where, in the absence of a CRC to make our spiritual home, we joined the Presbyterian Church.

In 1968 we arrived in Ottawa. At this point we were somewhat uncertain about which church to join. One of the churches we visited was Calvin CRC. I am sad to say that our experience was worse than Mrs. Los'; neither the minister nor the worshippers paid attention. Standing somewhat to the side, my wife and I watched the goings on for a few moments and then went home. We tried it once more with similar effects.

In the end, we remained Presbyterians; but it was a valuable experience.

Mrs. Los, if we only were the way we should be ... most of the time!

H. John Meyer,
Nepean, Ontario

Confession will bring renewal

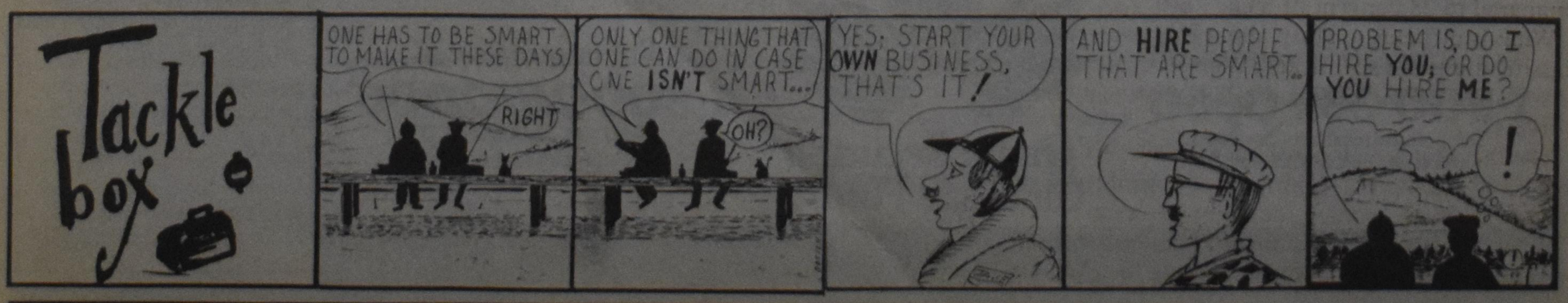
I am glad that the Koinonia-Cursillo controversy in St. Catharines appears to have given birth to a positive and healthy new emphasis, namely, one which recognizes the spiritual poverty in our corporate worship and life as a church.

I am encouraged that both Classes Niagara and Hamilton have agreed that this emphasis is a call to renewed life in Jesus Christ and "spiritual growth as described in the Bible (C.C., Oct. 30)." I am also glad that Rev. Vos, for one, has begun to preach "sermons directed towards spiritual growth." It can only be hoped that other ministers will be inspired by his example.

It is important to remember, however, that in the final analysis it will not be our *programs* which will bring renewal, but our *confession*, namely: Father, we have sinned. We recognize our stubborn pride, our greed for power and control, and our blindness to the leading of your Spirit. Forgive us, Father; help us to be humble again; help us to be servants rather than desire to be masters; and help us to open ourselves to your influence more and more, for then you *will* bring renewal and abundant life to us, your people. Amen.

It is my hope that such a confession will be practised in our classes and consistory rooms, as well as in our corporate congregational life as Christian Reformed Church.

Judy Cook,
Hamilton, Ontario


Tackle box
ONE HAS TO BE SMART TO MAKE IT THESE DAYS
RIGHT
ONLY ONE THING THAT ONE CAN DO IN CASE ONE ISN'T SMART...
OH?
YES; START YOUR OWN BUSINESS, THAT'S IT!
AND HIRE PEOPLE THAT ARE SMART...
PROBLEM IS, DO I HIRE YOU; OR DO YOU HIRE ME?
!

Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Egyptian evangelist ministers in Toronto

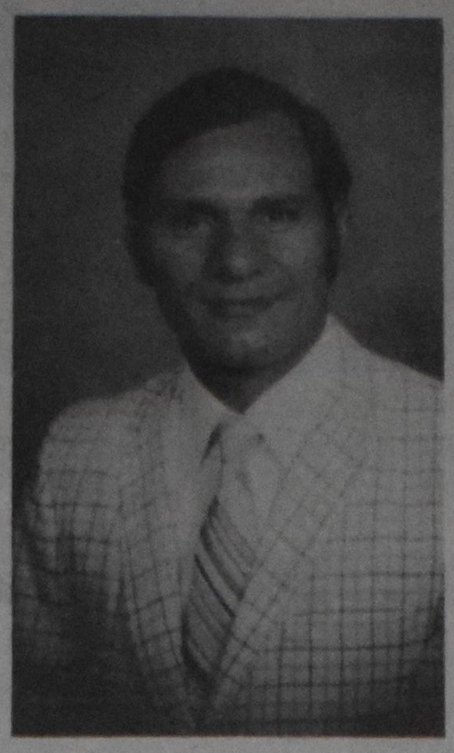
Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — "It is the providence of God that has brought me from Alexandria, Egypt, to Toronto to bring the gospel to Muslims," says Mars Fam, member of the Grace Christian Reformed Church of Scarborough.

Evangelist Fam is director of the Alpha and Omega Mission of Jesus Christ to Toronto, for which he engages in evangelism, preaching, teaching, counselling and healing in the name of Christ. It is an interdenominational mission which trusts the Lord for financial gifts to support the ministry. He is in a good place to use his special gifts — some 80,000 Arabic-speaking Muslims live in Toronto.

Fam began his ministry in Toronto in May 1986. He holds the Master of Divinity degree from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson Mississippi, and is also a graduate of the Reformed Bible College (RBC) in Grand Rapids, Michigan. At RBC he met his wife Frances, a Dutch Canadian student from the Maritimes who is a nurse. They have two small children. The whole family has Canadian citizenship.

A graduate in psychology from the University of Cairo, Fam worked as a clinical psychologist with the government for seven years, at the same time preaching and doing evangelistic teaching in various churches in Egypt, and also in Sudan.



Mars Fam, Missionary to Muslims in Toronto.

"I felt that God was calling me strongly to give myself completely to evangelistic work, but I resisted the call at first because I wanted to stay in my job and I didn't fully trust the Lord with an uncertain future," he says. But the call came so strongly in 1977 that he could no longer resist. His friend, the American Presbyterian missionary Rev. Benson Male, received a visit in Egypt from Dr. Dick L. Van Halsema, President of Reformed Bible College. Male arranged for them to meet, and Van Halsema arranged a scholarship at RBC.

Fam does his evangelistic work house to house, on university campuses, in shopping malls, in offices and stores. He says there is a fantastic amount of work, a great opportunity. He enjoys preaching, and has preached in Christian Reformed churches in Nova Scotia and PEI as well as in Ontario.

He does personal counselling, also by letter and phone. Recently he was able to help save the marriage of an Arab couple on the edge of divorce. He assists with healing through prayer.

Mars Fam has a vision that his mission will be able to have a radio broadcast of its own "enabling it to preach and teach the Word of God to the hungry multitudes of Muslims, Arabs, and others." He has approached station CHIN, the multicultural station in Toronto, but they need $300 per half hour, too much money at present. He is praying that the Lord will open the way.

Although there is other Christian witness to Muslims in Toronto, Fam chooses to work independent of others. He is in the process of identifying Christians from various denominations to serve on a board of directors for this nonprofit charitable evangelistic mission. Fam has a heart of love and zeal for the Good News of Jesus Christ, which gives him boldness and willingness to take personal risks for the sake of his Lord. He is grateful for a place to do this free from government persecution.

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Pastoral Pondering

A vision for a lost humanity

John Kerssies

The final observation made by the church visitor I have referred to in previous columns is that Reformed churches do very little in actual evangelism. He did not mean that these churches were idle, but that, in spite of their efforts, very few people were actually led to Jesus Christ.

I am sure that here again we touch on a truism which not many of us dare to deny. The records annually shown in the Christian Reformed, Reformed Church of America and other Reformed year books will confirm this assertion. Church growth within these churches is either birth growth or at best transfer growth. Let's face it, in the area of evangelism, we are not doing well.

In the past decades, CRC Home Missions has tried to analyse reasons for apparent lack of conversion growth in the Christian Reformed Church. Home Missions has been very helpful in suggesting new ways of overcoming lethargical attitudes.

Some will say that the CRC is too comfortable and cozy within its ethnic shell. Others would claim that it is too cold, too doctrinal, and in fact too legalistic in its approach to the gospel. Whatever reason one espouses, the bottom line is that its members' zeal for evangelism is not glowing very brightly.

Pastors and other church leaders are sometimes encouraged to attend church growth and/or evangelism seminars. I have been to some of them. These seminars usually give attendees a temporary shot in the arm, so that the person comes home ready to set the world (or at least the church) on fire. After a few months, the enthusiasm wears off, and not much happens as a result of such seminars. At least, such has been my experience.

I wonder if something is not really missing. Sometime ago a CRC missionary spoke about a vision she had received from the Lord. It was a vision of people lost in their sins and, therefore, on the way to hell. It was a vision which showed the glory of God and his great love for a lost and sinful humanity. It was this vision, so she said, which the Lord used to engage her in his missionary calling.

Is it possible that what is lacking in the church as a whole is such a vision? Workshops in evangelism are a start. However, perhaps we need to pray more fervently, "Lord, give us vision!"

John Kerssies is pastor of Calvin Christian Reformed Church, Ottawa, Ontario.

GKN committee would drop church institute/organism distinction

AMSTERDAM (RES) — Abraham Kuyper's distinction between the Church as institution and the Church as organism or body is no longer necessary for church work, according to a study committee of the Christian Reformed Church in The Netherlands (GKN). Already in the late nineteenth century, Kuyper's ideas led to the creation of Christian social organizations in The Netherlands that were separate from the institution of the church. The taskgroup "Church and Welfare" prepared a report for discussion at the GKN general synod which concluded that these distinctions should not be held on to. It was in any case, the report noted, not an official position of the church, although it was admitted to have had a great usefulness and impact until the 1960s. The committee noted that society had changed greatly and that the church had become involved as institution in many areas of society, particularly through the expanded role of its diaconal agencies.

In a review of the report, Dr. K. Runia, editor-in-chief of *Centraal Weekblad,* commented that the report was entirely sociological and descriptive in its method. There was no discussion of the principles that lie behind Kuyper's distinctions, Runia noted. Runia concluded that the general synod could take little specific action on this kind of document in any case.

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Family

Dissident art display at gothic church meets with disapproval from government

WROCLAW, Poland (EP) — Works of religious and non-religious art fill the large, brick Church of the Holy Cross, one of Wroclaw's largest gothic churches, in a display called the National Biennial of Young Artists, where dissident artists have found a place of refuge in post-martial law Poland.

The exhibit was a display of the works of artists outside Poland's officially sanctioned artistic community. A religious canvas depicted Christ and the disciples on the Mount of Olives; the larger-than-life figures were frontal nudes. Some of the non-religious pieces, depicting anger, fear, violence, and loneliness, included four large canvases by Tadeusż Boruta, a Kracow painter, featuring a naked male figure on barren snow-covered fields.

This year, 151 artists from all over Poland were chosen to display 423 pieces, including paintings, drawings and sculpture. The display also included theater productions and a two-day symposium entitled, "Approaches to understanding cultural variety and artistic freedom." "The church must not limit artistic effort in any way," said Adam Dyczkowski, the Auxiliary Bishop of Wroclaw. The nudes, he explained, were not erotic representations, but were displayed "when the intrinsic subject matter demanded it."

The exhibit has met with various responses, one being antagonism from Communist authorities, who have sought to suppress the show, appealing to a law that prohibits works of a nonreligious nature to appear in church buildings. The government organized a similar exhibit in Sopot in the north but Jarodzki said, "A state of healthy competitiveness has emerged.

"This is an experiment, that within the walls of a church art should appear, and art that is not strictly addressed to the needs of the church," said Konrad Jarodzki, an art teacher at the Wroclaw Polytechnic School, and an organizer of the exhibit. He concluded that "the experiment has succeeded."

Rare natural phenomenon hits Vancouver

BURNABY, B.C. — A totally unexpected shower dampened the normally sunny Vancouver area in the early hours of Sunday, Oct. 25, spilling as much as 2.4 millimetres of rain (0.1 inch) on some communities here.

It was the first measurable rainfall since Oct. 3 when Environment Canada reported 0.2 millimetres of rain. Prior to that, scattered showers left traces of moisture July 5 and Aug. 13, while isolated dusters are said to have occurred Sept. 2, 14 and 26

Officials at Vancouver International Airport's weather bureau had no explanation for the surprise shower as no front of any kind has appeared on their radar screens for some time. Air traffic was not in the least disrupted by the rare event.

Actually wet

In several municipalities, however, streets were reported to have actually been wet, and two separate motorcycle accidents were attributed, in part, to slippery conditions, sending four people to hospital instead of the ninth annual Toy Run in Coquitlam.

Black-outs in Whalley, Surrey and Vancouver were also blamed on the rainfall when moisture entering cracks in several lines caused short circuits, according to a B.C. Hydro spokesman, leaving several houses and their occupants in the dark.

Although most Vancouverites slept through the singular event, several others remember precisely where they were and what they were doing at the time. "I was gazing out the window sipping my coffee," 68-year-old S. Lowe said, "and when the coffee was gone it dawned on me the window was wet."

Unless a prolonged heavy rainfall comes upon the Lower Mainland soon, the Vancouver area will face a serious water shortage. Three major reservoirs supplying the region's municipalities are so severely depleted that local residents may soon be forced to curtail the sprinkling of lawns and gardens, not to mention the week-end washing of family cars.

Long-term weather forecasts are not encouraging. Already having set new records for dryness and hours of sunshine, Vancouver can expect no quick relief from the unrelenting sunshine, blue skies, moderate temperatures, gentle winds and generally pleasant, beautiful, simply gorgeous weather.

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

I've Heard the Mermaids Singing

Rated PG
Stars Sheila McCarthy, Paule Baillargeon, Ann-Marie MacDonald
Directed by Patricia Rozema

I've heard the mermaids singing, each to each;
I do not think that they will sing to me.
Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock
T.S. Eliot

If you haven't yet seen this film, which was acclaimed earlier this year at the international Cannes Festival, there is still time — if you live in or near a major city. (It's not the kind of film that plays well — if at all — in rural areas or even in cities like St. Catharines.)

This is a well-crafted, gentle film by Canadian director Patricia Rozema (a former daughter of the CRC). It's not profound, it's not deeply affecting; but it's life-affirming and rejects the phoniness with which so many of us insulate ourselves.

Paule, a bright, sweetly naive young woman is the protagonist. This is *her* film, i.e., what we see is her home-videotaped retrospective of Danielle (her middle-aged boss who runs an art gallery), Mary (Danielle's young lover) and herself. (Rozema presents Paule as at first repulsed and then ambiguous about the relationship between Danielle and Mary.)

Paule has been incompetent at every job she had, including as Danielle's secretary. But she is loyal and loving and Danielle knows it; so she's kept on.

Paule has one secret passion: photography. She takes pictures — hundreds of them — for the sheer joy of it. She's privately proud of her work, and wishes Danielle to be, but she has no pretentions about whatever talent she may have. Still, she is deeply stung by Danielle's blunt comments when she anonymously sends some photographs to the gallery for Danielle's appraisal.

Paule has been overwhelmed by the art and sophisticated people she sees around her, by Danielle's savvy in that art world: Paule has heard the mermaids singing to each other, but she does not think they will sing to her. She accepts that graciously: some people have gifts, some don't.

One night though, with a liquor-loosened tongue acquired at her own birthday party, Danielle tells Paule she is a painter herself, not just the gallery's curator. She shows Paule some paintings and Paule is enthralled. Paule eventually finds out that she and a lot of others are being duped.

If there is one lesson the trusting Paule had to learn it was that things — and people — are not always what they seem. (There is no cynicism in Rozema's depiction of that view.) However, there is much more that Paule has to teach; the self-effacing "student" is really the teacher of those more jaded and selfish.

It is fitting that Rozema refers to words spoken by T.S. Eliot's J. Alfred Prufrock. The prematurely old Prufrock is culture-ridden and world weary, lacking passion. Danielle reflects Prufrock's characteristics, while Paule is the exuberant idealist. ("Your needs are *so* simple," Danielle tells Paule, wearily). Ironically, it is sweet-souled Paule who, we gradually see, is more in touch with reality than Danielle is.

Paule comes to recognize that the mermaids have indeed sung to *her*.

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For the time being...

Adrian Peetom

Church leavers: who abandons whom?

I keep meeting people who have left the church, and I've begun to ask them why. So far the answers are only confusing. Some days I fondly remember my youth, when life was black and white, then those within church were thought to be obedient, and those without not so. But now trusted friends drift away, yet remain friends still, while one's own adult children either barely hang in there, or break the ties, yet remain children still. And I myself, though still inside, so seldom feel a constituent part, and wonder for how long I'll remain.

Wanting to understand

Who are the church leavers? A recent book, *Fragmented Gods: The Power and Potential of Religion in Canada**, provides us with reams of statistics and argues that — statistically speaking — the average church non-attender is liable to be religious still, while at the same time choosing to be a rather selective consumer of what various congregations have to offer. The book helped me remain thoughtful about my own involvement with the church, and it provided me with some useful current statistical information about denominations, patterns of TV evangelism and a prediction about the imminent serious financial problems faced by many Canadian mainline congregations and denominations.

But the information was only useful to a point. The writer/sociologist did not — and could not — help me understand the dynamics of church leaving in the life of any specific individual.

I would like to understand why people leave. Perhaps I will leave some day, and I would want to understand myself then. More, perhaps while seeking to understand the stories of other leavers, I might become equipped to become a better church member now. For the few glimpses I have been permitted into the life of church leavers have revealed anger, yes, frustration, yes, accusations towards the church, yes; but also and most often pain hidden behind the strong words, the clenched fists, the blazing eyes. And I ask whether the church somehow could have prevented that person from breaking bonds of upbringing, tradition, faith community, ritual, and perhaps family and friends.

I can think of gifted young women — I have met them — who one day made profession of faith, and heard words of welcome that included an invitation to make use of *all* the privileges of church membership, only to realize later that the *all* was reserved for the boys only. I can think of artists, thinkers, explorers, inventors — I have met them — who found themselves constantly watched with suspicion, especially by a congregation's traditional core from which office bearers almost certainly are chosen. I can think of people of all ages — I have met them — who once enthusiastically pursued the promises of liturgical renewal, faith intimacy and greater shaping power in the life of their beloved congregation, but who finally grew tired from always having to explain, defend, and allay suspicion. And it is when I think of them that I ask: "Who abandoned whom?"

Who was this man?

Among the many interesting people I have had the privilege to meet was a certain P. Keuning. I only met him a few times when I was a teenaged boy. Most memories are vague now, as in some ways this man was vague even when I knew him. I don't remember him as a long-standing church member who regularly served his stint as elder or deacon in our relatively small congregation. Rather, this publisher and author — as I knew him to be even then — seemed to have joined one day, as if from nowhere.

Who was this grave man, this somewhat forbidding figure? But then someone (my father?) told me that he had been member of many churches, of different denominations even, a wandering Christian, and I remember being intrigued by him. And then, one day, he visited our home in some official capacity (elder?)

After discussions with my parents he drew me out to speak my mind and feelings in a sharing and honest way. He seemed not interested in the pious platitudes or party lines that have been the agenda of so many elder visits throughout my life. This man took me seriously as a teenaged person, even though my thoughts and emotions must have strayed a bit from orthodox paths. He wasn't judgmental, or sarcastic, or bent on straightening me out. He listened, asked questions, especially about what I read (whatever I could lay my hands on) and liked in school (not all that much).

Questions I have

Although afterwards he always acknowledged my presence whenever he saw me, I never had a talk with him again. Soon afterwards I emigrated to Canada. If I could meet him again I would ask him to tell me a bit about the years of his church wandering. Why could he not stay church put for long? Did he ever not go at all for periods of time? How did his family and friends cope with his decisions and mind-changing?

Was there a link between his best-known novel — I had read it already when we first met, and I still read it once in a while — and the life he had led?

I would hope — expect even — that he would be willing to listen to my own frequent church membership doubts, and understand my own periods of attendance abstinence. And, of course, behind my questions would rest the firm conviction that he had remained a believer through it all.

I have not consciously patterned myself after this man, although I too became a writer, a publisher, and a bit of a church wanderer. But my fondly thinking of him still, almost 40 years later, seems significant. I would certainly wish that the type of love and empathy he displayed towards me I show towards others.

Perhaps this article is a small beginning. It seems so easy to make obedient/disobedient decisions, and then dismiss the leavers as those who abandoned the faith. But in too many, I sense a feeling of having been abandoned, when who they were and what they thought and felt was so much seen as evil that to remain in place became impossible. I guess that P. Keuning's unruffled acceptance of me undoubtedly helped disarm my youthful heresies in the end.

Telling and hearing a tough story

I telephoned a man who no longer attends church, although his wife and children do. I asked him for an interview. He refused. I can't even begin to guess why he left the church, or why he wouldn't want to tell us his story. I respect his decision, and I also wish he would change his mind. I have a feeling both he and the Body of Christ would benefit, even if he never went to church again. I wish others would tell their stories, young and old, beyond the clipped harsh words and telling single incident.

And so I issue two invitations. One to those who no longer go to church, to find a trusted church member and tell the story of a life that ended outside the church. One to pew sitters, to turn into *those trusted* church members, mature Christians ready to hear a tough story without condemnation and ulterior motive. I know there are many stories, beautiful and ugly stories. I think they need to be told, one by one, not for polemics and judgments, but for the bringing out of pain and peace in the lives of people who somehow could no longer fit the mould of their tribe and upbringing.

* *Fragmented Gods: The Power and Potential of Religion in Canada*. Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1987.

Adrian Peetom is Senior Editor of Scholastic-TAB Publications Ltd. He lives in Willowdale, Ontario.

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Dr. Harry Fernhout

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Dr. Paul Marshall

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Getting soaked in the rushing waters

A non-charismatic reports on the Holy Spirit Conference

Bert Witvoet

I decided to attend the Holy Spirit Conference in Ancaster this year. Last year there was some controversy about this "strange" event in the midst of Reformdom. Not having attended one of these myself, I did not feel qualified to form my own opinion. But if there is one thing I've learned in this editor's job, it is that one should never adopt an ostrich policy with respect to difficult questions. There is no way one can avoid taking a position, even if it is limited to deciding which articles to place and which articles not to place.

I must be honest and say that these assignments are not easy for me. There is no anonymity for me as I stalk around, taking pictures. Nor is it easy to get into the spirit of things when the job demands a certain amount of distance. On top of that, I want to guard my person from being "sucked into" a fairly strong maelstrom of spirituality. Yet, I did not want to hide behind "objectivity." One needs a Word-and-Spirit-directed subjectivity to do justice to these kind of events.

The best way to report on this conference, I thought, is to explain how I experienced it, with my heart prayerfully prepared and all my Reformed sensors on red alert.

A subculture of praise.

The morning session saw some 900 people, most of them Christian Reformed as far as I could tell, gather in the gymnasium of Redeemer College. The "celebration team" from Meadowvale Christian Reformed Church was on stage, as it lead the people in praise and worship. I don't think I knew more than one of the several choruses and hymns that were flashed on the overhead screen. But most of the people in attendance knew them. Proof, in my opinion, that there is a subculture of praise going on under our very noses. Not bothersome to me — just an observation.

To say that the singing was lively is an understatement.

Photo: Bert Witvoet

Attention easily spilled over into adoration.

Hands are very important in charismatic services. There was raising of hands, clapping of hands, swaying of hands, holding of hands, and some hands were banging away on tambourines. The feet got into the picture as well. Some participants were dancing up and down to the beat of the music. A small group of women and girls were floating banners through the aisles. And then there were the faces of praise — beaming faces.

I couldn't connect personally, (think back to my explanations of guardedness) but I could appreciate the joy and spontaneity around me.

Why Mainse?

Chief organizer Gerrit Verstraete introduced David Mainse of 100 Huntley Street, the keynote speaker. "Why David Mainse?" Gerrit asked. Good question, Gerrit. If this is a Holy Spirit conference to the Reformed faith, why not a charismatic person from the Reformed faith? Gerrit explained that the Lord had told him to ask David.

At first Verstraete resisted the idea, since David's last name was not Vandermainse. But the Lord brought his name up again, and upon further inquiry, Oct. 24 was the only open day on David Mainse's agenda. My mind goes a little funny now — either Gerrit is a lot closer to God than I am, or he confuses the voice of God with his own preferences.

It certainly could not be denied that it was in the divine scheme of things that David Mainse spoke that morning. And what he said was fairly scriptural. "The Holy Spirit always works according to the revealed Word of God," said Mainse. That sounds pretty Reformed to me. Did someone prompt him on what Reformed people want to hear? Don't yield to cynicism now. No doubt Mainse believes what he is saying.

Getting soaked

"God made promises," said Mainse. "One of those promises was that his Spirit will be poured out on all flesh." Mainse distinguished between the Spirit coming within us and upon us. "If you want to be a sprinkler," he said, referring to both infant baptism and Holy Spirit baptism, "go out in the rain and get soaked with the Holy Spirit." Applause and amens greeted his statement.

Mainse left no doubt that the spiritual experiences of the early church are ongoing experiences today. He himself at first resisted speaking in tongues when he was a young man. When he recounted how his own children began speaking in tongues, Mainse started to weep. His nine-year-old son, who could not speak a sentence without stuttering, suddenly spoke fluently in English as well as in tongues.

I did not doubt what Mainse was saying; but again, I could not connect to this weeping man. "He can turn that on anytime he wants to," I told myself. "I bet he cries a lot on television."

Testimony time

The morning session was over, and people sat down for lunch in the halls and cafeteria. I had brought my own lunch and found myself sitting with

Continued on page 10...

Satisfying the hunger for freedom and vitality

A charismatic reports on the Holy Spirit Conference

Henry Wildeboer

Approximately 1,000 people came to the campus of Redeemer College to celebrate the vitality, life — and especially — the freedom of being alive in Christ and worshipping in the joy of the Spirit. It became obvious that there is much interest in the life and work of the Holy Spirit among Reformed believers.

There was a time when "Charismatic" and "Reformed" were mutually exclusive terms. One simply could not be both. This conference proved that is no longer the case. For councils, especially pastors, to teach that a charismatic Christian has no place in the Christian Reformed Church is contrary to the decisions of the Synod of 1973. Such teachings declare to many of our members that they do not really belong in the CRC. In talking with some of those present I sense that they feel that way already.

The Synod of 1973 declared that there is no biblical evidence to limit any of the gifts of the Spirit to any one particular era. We are not dispensationalists on this issue! For about 20 years now various Reformed people have been blessed with various gifts, including the more controversial ones, such as tongues, prophecy and healing.

Unfortunately, the receiving of a gift, such as tongues, is rarely accompanied with the fruit of patience or gentleness. As with all of us, patience takes time to mature. This is often sadly forgotten by the one who has received "a gift" as well as others in the congregation who tend to become threatened by the joyful exuberance and alienated by the intolerant impatience.

I, for one, believe that I am thoroughly Reformed in that I long and pray to see the Kingdom of God come in *all* areas of life. But I am also a "charismatic" in that I believe that *all* of the gifts of God's Spirit are available for God's people today. They are given by God as *tools* to enrich worship of God and service to his world and church, rather than *toys* for one's amusement — or worse — to brag about. To be truly Reformed is to be "biblically charismatic!"

The conference

Upon arriving at Redeemer I was immediately struck by the excitement, exuberance and overall "happy" atmosphere. People from every part of Ontario, as well as from places like Nova Scotia and Michigan, were greeting and hugging each other. A good hug (I had to learn to like that!) is very common for charismatics. Many expressed that they had "waited" a long time for "today" to join in praise and celebration, to worship God with hundreds of others in songs of praise with clapping, the raising of hands and dancing.

At 10:00 a.m., Grace and Colleen Reinders led a time of singing in a spirited, enthusiastic way. They were accompanied by the "Celebration Singers" from the Meadowvale CRC. Some songs were accompanied with teenage girls dancing and waving colourful banners. The crowd immediately joined in enthusiastically.

The Rev. David Mainse, host of 100 Huntley Street, was the morning speaker. I believe that was not a wise decision on Gerrit Verstraete's part, even though he shared that "God had given" him the name of Mainse as speaker. The speaker was obviously Pentecostal in the view of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" seeing it as a "distinct and separate second blessing coming upon the believer." Most evangelicals and Reformed people part ways with Pentecostals on the New Testament exegesis on this matter. Mainse gave various examples of Christians who were baptized with the Spirit and whose lives were drastically empowered, usually accompanied with the gift of tongues "for that unruly member" of our body, the tongue.

I believe that the New Testament teaches that I, along with all Christians, have the Spirit of God. However, the Spirit does not yet control all of me. This control grows as I yield to the Spirit by being ongoingly filled (Eph. 5:18) as the Word of God dwells in me richly. That growth may occur quietly like the gentle zephyr or it may occur by leaps and bounds creating tumultuous changes in one's life in rather short order.

Yieldedness to the lordship

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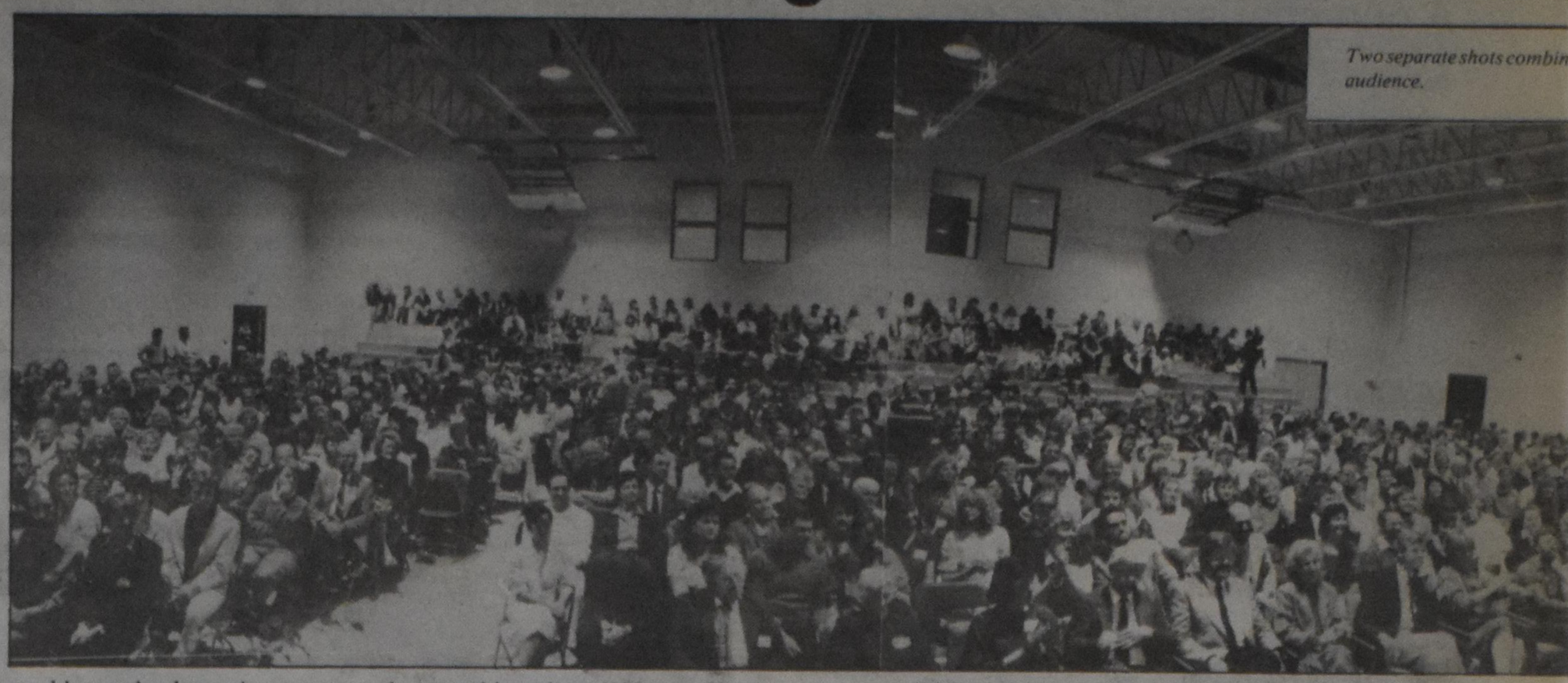
Feature

Getting soaked in the rushing waters A non-charismatic re

...continued from page 9.



Two separate shots combin audience.

six or seven other conferees with Dutch names. I had not registered formally so I was not wearing a name tag. But as soon as they found out who I was, it was testimony time.

I found the stories very convincing and happy; but I asked myself, why are these people testifying to me about their conversions? Do they feel I need one like theirs?

I told them that my own spiritual growth had been gradual throughout my life, and that the Lord has different ways of bringing us closer. "No," one man said, "there is only one way, Jesus." "Yes, I know," I replied, "but Jesus uses different ways of reaching us." "There's only one way," he quietly persisted. "Okay," I said in resignation. I had little desire to pursue this discussion further.

So far the day was going, but not too well for me. I still felt strange and out of it. I couldn't connect. But that would change during the course of the afternoon.

God binds himself

The afternoon was workshop time and each person could attend only two in sequence. The list of workshops explains why this conference is called the Holy Spirit conference. The topics reveal the focus on the presence and the gifts of the Spirit — "Spiritual Power to Witness," "Healing for Today," "Spiritual Warfare," "The Key to Revelation Knowledge," "Fruit of the Spirit," and several others.

I more or less meandered into Alice Verstraete's workshop, entitled "Prayer that gets things done." I know Alice from the time I was a high school teacher and she was a student at Hamilton District Christian High School. I marveled at the poise and fluency of this person I had known as a giggly, drop-out teenager. Today she was going to instruct me and others on effective prayer. Why not?

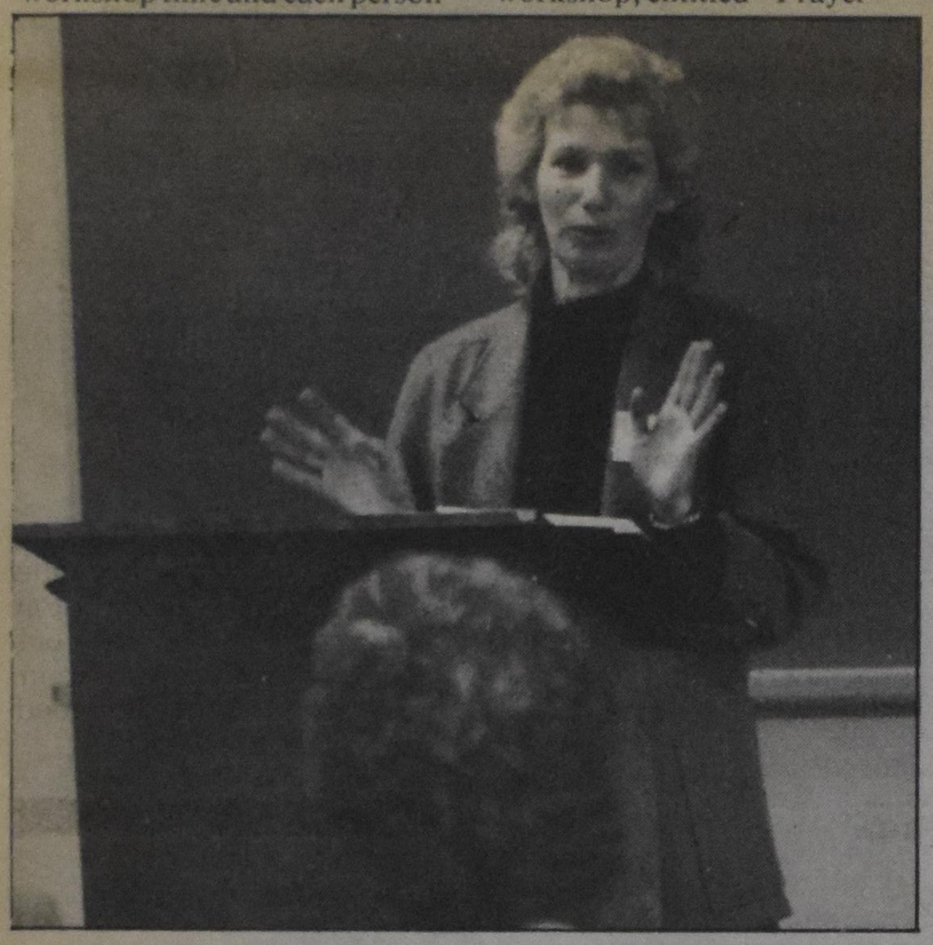


Photo: Bert Witvoet

Alice Verstraete talked about prayer that works.

Alice began by reading an article which said that God cannot do anything unless someone asks Him. Interesting thought, but is it biblical? I wondered. I know that God voluntarily binds himself to his people, but always?

"You cannot just ask anything in prayer," Alice said. "You have to find out what the perfect will of God is. The Holy Spirit, who prays alongside us, will pray through us the perfect will of God."

"All right," I think, "if you put it that way, I can live with the first statement: God binds himself to the Holy-Spirit-led prayers of the people. But I still think He acts beyond that.

"We have the assurance of the Holy Spirit that we can pray his will," Alice continued. He does that in three ways: 1) by bringing God's will to remembrance, working with what you already know; 2) by living in you in a still small voice, which you have to learn to hear by denying the flesh and 3) by having you pray in the Spirit, in a tongue.

Spirit for all seasons

There was nothing emotional or terribly mysterious about what Alice was saying, and I felt I had benefited from having been taught something by her that my "Word-oriented" tradition was rather weak on. We need to listen more to that still small voice of the Spirit, and we need to acknowledge our instrumentality in having God's will done on earth through our prayers.

Towards the end of the workshop there was opportunity to sit down in groups of four or five for prayer. Some people left. I decided to stay around and participate. I had to do something as man instead of as reporter. There was prayer for strength and healing. It was good, and I felt nourished.

The same authority

On to the next workshop led by Rev. John Groen, an-honest-to-goodness pastor in the Christian Reformed Church. It's so nice to have an official stamp of the institutional church on this business of searching out the work of the Holy Spirit. Here, at least, was a man who had come up through the ranks of Reformed theology and had from his studies of the Word of God and Reformed theology come to accept the validity of all the gifts of the Spirit for today.

Groen spoke on "The authority of the believer." Sounds like a Reformation topic. "I always believed that as a minister I had the authority to proclaim the Word of God and declare forgiveness of sins when there is repentance," said Groen. But he found out later that Jesus also gave his followers the authority to heal. "It's one and the same authority," said Groen. "In fact, the authority to drive out evil demons and to heal was given to the disciples before the authority to preach," which was passed on only after the resurrection.

Jesus never prayed for healing, said Groen. He commanded healing. "He rebuked the fever. I needed a strong passage to convince me that this was also for me." Groen found it in Mark 11:23 — the mountain-into-the-sea passage. "When there are obstacles, speak against them. The Father says to us, '*You* do something about them.'" Again that theme of our instrumentality.

The time is ripe

Groen recounted how in his own ministry the Lord honoured his promise that sickness would flee at the command of healing. Although Groen himself does not have the gift of healing, he believes that he and all believers

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ports on the Holy Spirit Conference

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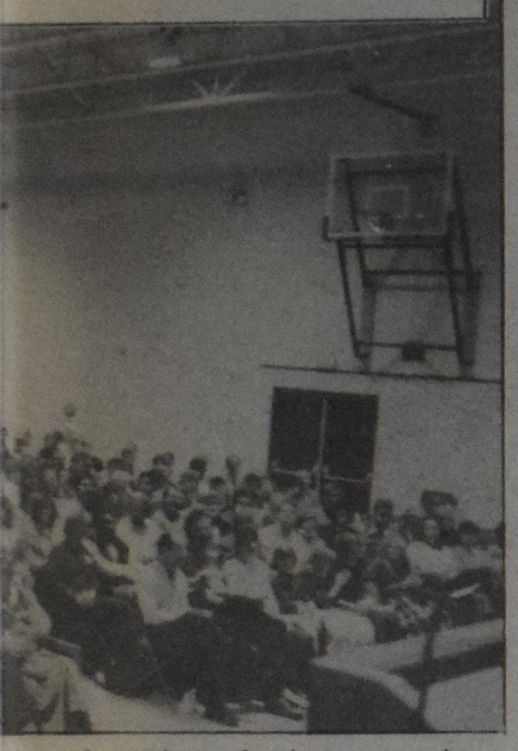

have the authority on occasion to speak against demons and other obstacles to spiritual and physical well-being. "But before we seek healing, the 'junk' in a person's life has to go first," he said.

Groen told his listeners that they should listen to what God is saying. Is it God's will and time for healing? Nothing must be assumed here. Work as a group; consult with the sick person. Not everybody gets healed, he warned. God is sovereign in the way He works his will.

How can anyone do Jesus' work without his authority and power? Groen asked. "The time is ripe now to talk about these things."

So much to think about after these two workshops. Haven't we shortchanged God on the way He wants to work through us? Is our reverence for God's authority not easily a cover-up for our lack of trust and faith in how He wants to use us?

Don't walk away from people

The evening service featured a speech by Gerrit Verstraete on John 17:21 — "That they may all be one, Father." According to Verstraete it is not enough to believe that all Christians are spiritually one, and he issued a call for a physical manifestation of that unity. "Jesus is waiting for his prayer to be answered through us.

"The people who disagree with you are not your enemies," he reminded the audience. Satan is your enemy. Walk away from strife, but don't walk away from people. Then the world will know that we are one."

It had been a positive but low-key speech with little audience response, and I was thinking that the rest of the service might fall a little flat. But here I was in for a surprise.

Rushing waters

If the singing had been inspired in the morning, it was super-charged at night. There were songs more familiar to most Christian Reformed people, and these and others were delivered in a swell of praise and honour that must have found its way onto the Redeemer repair bill for the roof.

It was soul-warming to hear almost a thousand voices exuberantly sing "Nearer still nearer, close to my heart .... Give me but Jesus, my Lord crucified." Never in my experience had this song evoked such longing and such praise. It reminded me of the Revelation passage, "Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder."

After the singing, there were moments of prayer, singing and speaking in tongues. At one point a woman broke into a long "tongue" speech. I marvelled at the beauty of her speech — the rising and falling of sounds, the pure vowels, the clarity of her voice in that big gymnasium. Her speech was followed by an interpretation, given by another woman. I could tell from the intonation, the climaxes and the length that this was indeed what the first woman had said in a strange tongue. It was a message of love from God for his people. It was strong comfort and a gentle urging to do His will and to trust in him. Nearby a young

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Photo: Bert Witvoet

The Celebration Team of Meadowvale CRC brought enthusiasm and leadership in song.

Satisfying the hunger for freedom and vitality

A charismatic reports on the Holy Spirit Conference

...continued from page 9.

of Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, creates boldness to witness and openness to gifts in many instances. The crippling fear of "what will others say" is often broken resulting in a new, never-experienced-before liberation. I praise God when this happens; I pray God that it might occur in many lives in many congregations.

The afternoon was filled with workshops. Each participant could attend two sessions. Because I did not stay for the evening time of worship and praise, I cannot contribute any report on that. I will add some evaluative comments under the headings of "blessings" and "concerns."

Blessings

1. I am grateful to the Christian Communications Centre for organizing the conference. It is needed for many of our CRC members. Among many of them I sensed a struggle as to what to do. They are deeply committed to their church, at the same time, they hunger for more freedom, life and vitality and pray daily for more openness in our worship services. I cringe when I hear someone saying, "I still go to _____ CRC but occasionally go to _____ church for a lift," or, "to get fed."

Many churches need people like Grace and Colleen to help develop more worship leaders among us. Especially evening services need to make more room for participatory prayer, sharing and the use of various musical instruments along with dynamic, relevant preaching. Desperately needed is a conference to aid pastors, elders and worship committees to come to terms with this.

An annual conference, though needed, is not enough for most of the conferees. We need to say some things within a biblical, Reformed context about life in the Spirit of God in such areas as:

— the baptism and fulness of the Holy Spirit
— the gifts of the Spirit in the church today
— worship and the participation of gifted members
— spiritual battle and the reality of Satan
— the area of healing and the gifts, signs and wonders — healing services for the congregation, etc.

2. There is a genuine desire to seek to be Reformed and to make a meaningful contribution to our various Reformed people. I appreciate the efforts of the organizers to seek to integrate charismatic activity and experiences into the Reformed community. This is urgently needed and requires the participation of many others.

It also requires a community of acceptance which encourages questions and struggles in these areas. Too often those searching for answers in a non-traditional aspect of our congregational life are judged by the others as being "un-Reformed." No greater woe could befall me as a CRC pastor. I sensed that many of these people struggled with similar fears that I experienced; the judgment of friends and colleagues, "He's gone off the deep end into the charismatic pools of excessive, unbridled, unReformed, exuberance."

3. The conference brings many church members together so that they might learn that they are by no means alone. Most of them really *want* to stay with the CRC. I appreciate the efforts made to give occasion for them to meet and encourage each other. I was pleased to note that the evening message would deal with the theme of "unity." Leaving a church is a serious step, as most people well realize.

Concerns

1. My deepest concern is regarding theological sloppiness. Reformed people do not agree with the Pentecostal view of "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" and thus care needs to be taken that it is *not* presented and taught by any of the main speakers. To do so is to raise further cries of alarm and skepticism from those who are already suspicious.

2. Who are we going to use as key participants? Though I love my Pentecostal friends, I would be reluctant to use as speakers and workshop leaders the host of 100 Huntley Street or the local chairperson of Woman Aglow. I realize only too well that there are relatively few Reformed people who can lead "charismatic" worship services and give leadership in this area. In all fairness to Mr. Verstraete, I must admit that he had invited the involvement of some within the Reformed community who declined the invitation due to other commitments.

3. I sincerely hope that another conference will be planned for 1988. Perhaps it would be helpful to draw together a planning committee that does some ground work. It may already be in place; if so, it was not obvious. There *is* a need for Reformed charismatics to be able to meet to worship, fellowship and to *learn and grow* together. The conferees are open and eager to grow. They are open to biblical direction best received from those who accept and love them. For this God must be praised. It also creates a powerful hunger which must be biblically met.

It was good to be there. I plan to go again next year, D.V.

Henry Wildeboer is pastor of the Zion Christian Reformed Church in Oshawa, Ontario.

Features

Getting soaked in the rushing waters

A non-charismatic reports on the Holy Spirit Conference

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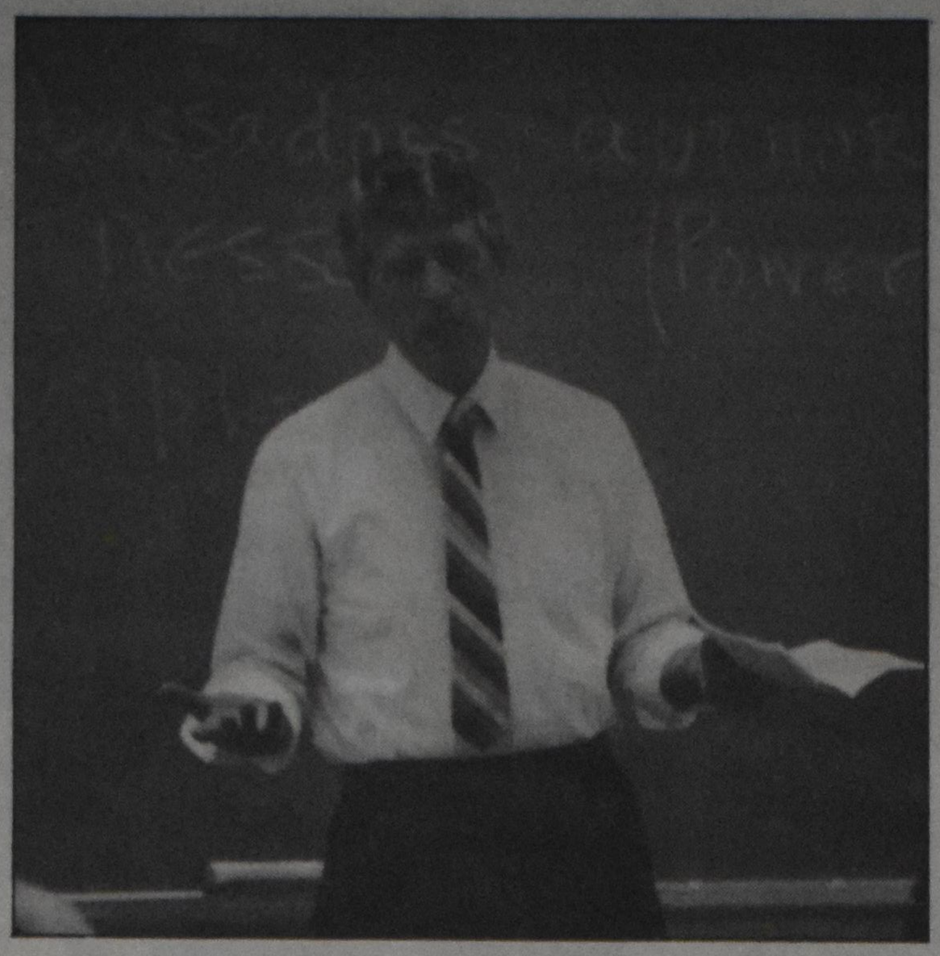

Photo: Bert Witvoet

John Groen explains the authority and power of believers.

woman sobbed.

The service concluded with an altar call and laying on of hands. Counsellors were waiting up front for the brokenhearted and suffering to come. And come they did.

Reversal of roles

I talked with a few "non-charismatic" sisters sitting next to me. They were convinced that what they had heard and seen that evening was genuinely spiritual. They said they had been tremendously enriched.

I wondered about the report I would write. Possibly I had missed a few theological points in the speeches. Possibly the leaders of the conference needed to be careful about the direction they were taking the people. I knew from previous studies that the fruits of the Spirit, like kindness, patience and humility are more important than the gifts. The gifts are but tools to do Christ's work. Yet, I also knew that a few days from Oct. 24 we would be singing with Martin Luther, "The Spirit and the gifts are ours." Are *all* the gifts ours?

I had managed to get a glimpse of the woman who had been speaking in tongues. She was another former student of mine. Doesn't that just beat everything? Does it say somewhere in the Bible that a student shall lead herteacher? It should. With a sigh of resignation I concluded that the education of an editor and former teacher continues.

Honest assessment

I felt I would be grieving the Spirit if I did not honestly report on how the day went for me. As it turned out, it had been a journey — from looking in to feeling one with everybody. Rev. Henry Wildeboer had promised to write his evaluation. I will leave some of the theological refinements up to him.

According to my Reformed tradition, a conference like this dangerously isolates the one person of the Trinity. I didn't get that feeling. The special focus on the Holy Spirit may well be an indication of a lack of balance in those churches which often take the work of the Holy Spirit for granted. Charismatics can teach us much about the work and gifts of the Spirit. For the rest, they need to be corrected and taught as much as any one of us. As David Mainse had said in the morning, "I have to keep my old man nailed to the cross daily."

Sometimes you hear the complaint that charismatics act as if they are spiritually superior, especially because they speak in tongues. I'm sure that has happened, as I am also sure that our discomfort makes us feel inferior. Show me a Christian who thinks he or she is spiritually superior, and I will show you a person who has missed the heart of the gospel. But at the conference I didn't come across such creatures. All I saw was happy and enthusiastic Christians who had learned to surrender themselves in full-bodied praise. And it looked to me that all three persons of the Trinity were included in that praise.

After the conversion: a

Ron Rupke

The author met Don and Debbie Waterhouse at a CLAC-organized conference last June. He was fascinated by their story about operating a distinctively Christian group home and Christian school. This second and final article tells how the Waterhouses developed alternative structures for the children in their care.

While in England, Don and Debbie read a biography of George Muller, a man often described as a "prayer warrier," and particularly remembered for his work with orphans in Great Britain during the 19th century. Don Waterhouse saw a connection with his own life's calling, and he was particularly interested in the fact that Muller's fundraising consisted entirely of prayer for God's provision.

Upon their return to Canada in January, 1977, Debbie and Don rented her parents' home in West Guilford, and soon opened their home to three young men, former Browndale residents, who had run into legal problems. Don was determined to use George Muller's approach to financial support for his work, and since no one in the household had any outside source of income, they came close to the point of starvation in a few months. During that time, Don tried to define his objectives in setting up a Christian group home, while praying for God's guidance and the monies to make it work.

In April several events occurred which Don understood to be answers to prayers. His father wrote that his mother was responding well to medical treatment, and one of Debbie's relatives sent a sum of money unexpectedly. Don was offered a job working for CHIMO youth services although he had not applied to work there, and he actually took that work for a brief two months. His experience with this organization only confirmed his strong desire to set up a distinctively Christian group home.

Meanwhile Debbie Waterhouse made an interesting contact at church one Sunday. A visiting realtor who had heard about the Waterhouse's goal told Debbie he knew of a property which might prove ideal for a group home. Soon Don and Debbie, with their friends Jake and Doris Pothaar, had visited a large farmhouse converted to a boy's camp, located on 83 acres between Harcourt and Highland Grove. They knew immediately that the property was right for their purposes and began to seek a means of buying it. Before long they had found a group of Christian business people willing to fund a non-profit foundation which they called "Highland Crossroads" after the hamlet and the intersection where the residence is located.

Whose funding methods?

When the Waterhouses and the Pothaars moved into the Highland Crossroads residence in the fall of 1977, four young residents moved in with them. The question of how to fund the operation had not been resolved, since Don was still determined to simply pray for God's direction and provision, while his board insisted that government funding was needed. Finally the board ordered that if Don's method had not worked by February 1978, the staff should make funding arrangements with their various contacts in the Children's Aid Societies.

In the month of February, several interesting contacts were made. A man at church handed Don a sum of money as a donation, and later two elderly persons visited Highland Crossroads, stating that they represented the Anglican Church Women, and that they had heard about the residence and wondered how it was supported. These people left a donation, but it seemed to Don that they were disappointed to find that arrangements had already been made to obtain funding and a licence to operate through government agencies.

As arranged with the board of directors, Don contacted social workers at the Catholic Children's Aid Society in early 1978 and began proceedings to operate a licenced group home. Since May 1978, Highland Crossroads has received financial support from Ontario's Ministry of Community and Social Services to care for eight residents. Most of these are young children who have become wards of the Children's Aid Society because they have no homes. Many have severe personality disorders such as autism or schizophrenia, and most have been impossible to place in foster families because of distrust of others, dishonesty and manipulation of others. Once placed in the group home, most children stay until they reach age 18, at which time they are considered to be responsible adults and no longer the responsibility of the state. Others, who are clearly not able to live independently, may continue to live in the residence if no more suitable living arrangement is available.

Family setting

In many ways the living arrangements at Crossroads follow the patterns of healthy

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Sales Rep.
(416) 899-3621

Christian group home and Christian school (2)

Photo: Courtesy Don and Debbie Waterhouse

Last year's population of Harcourt Christian School — aware of "emphasis on personal success and accomplishment."

family life, which is something most of these children have never had. Don and Debbie Waterhouse live in a single room in the residence, and even this bedroom is no more off limits to the children than the master bedroom of most homes. The children at the home are involved in outside activities such as sports programs and summer camp whenever possible. Meals are eaten together, and devotions take place regularly at meal time. Several families in the Harcourt church invite individual children over for a visit from time to time, thus acting as an extended family. Although Jake and Doris Pothaar at first lived in the residence as well, their growing family required different arrangements, and they now rent a home nearby. However, the partnership continues, and Jake can be found working at the residence during most normal working hours.

During the early years of Highland Crossroads, children living there were sent to public schools in the area Most of them needed special education, and consequently spent several hours per day in school buses. Debbie Waterhouse in particular observed that the children were discouraged by their schooling, where they would end up in base level classes where very little was required of them, they found no challenge or reward, and teachers generally expected them to perform poorly and to be going nowhere. For several years Debbie spent most of her evenings tutoring and helping the children with homework. Even this effort on her part tended to reinforce the discouragement and hopelessness many of the children felt, since they would wonder aloud why they had to spend so much extra time on their work when none of the other kids at school seemed to need this.

More importantly, the spiritual development of children living at Crossroads was often stalled or reversed during the school year. Debbie recalls one particular girl of high school age who made real progress in her openness and trust relationship with the house parents during the summer months. She was able to break some bad habits, and to take part in household devotions. In mid September, this girl told Debbie, "I'm being tempted to smoke." A few weeks later she confided, "I'm smoking again — but nothing else!" Before long she stopped discussing her own behaviour altogether, and quietly slipped back into her old habits.

Christian education needed

Crossroads staff also observed other examples of how peer pressure affects children, as the young Pothaar children began to play with somewhat older children at the home. Seeing how easily their children were persuaded to imitate the destructive behaviour of other children right within their own home, Jake and Doris Pothaar were unwilling to trust their children to the public school system.

For all of these reasons, the Waterhouses and the Pothaars were very interested when one of Debbie's cousins told them about school curriculum materials available through Accelerated Christian Education. After discussing the matter briefly at the Bible Chapel they attended in Harcourt, they invited the Canadian Co-ordinator for A.C.E. to visit their chapel to introduce his program of Christian education. Don and Debbie were intrigued by what he said, particularly since the A.C.E. curriculum materials are based on a programmed learning approach, which does not require trained teachers, but rather classroom monitors. Determined to try it out, Don and Debbie travelled to the A.C.E. training school in Lewiston, Texas, for a week of intensive training in how to use these curriculum materials. In September 1984, the Harcourt Christian School opened with three students — two Pothaar children, and the other a child of Debbie's cousin who had suggested the A.C.E. program in the first place.

By May 1985, the Waterhouses were confident enough about their school to enrol a child who came into their care that month. Another child who came to the Crossroads that summer would have had to travel a great distance to take a special education program in the public education system, and was enrolled in the A.C.E. school instead. Based on their experience with those two students, the Waterhouses decided to enrol all of the school children in their care in the Harcourt Christian School for the 1986-87 school year.

"The A.C.E. system works extremely well for our special needs children," Debbie claims. "Each child has an individualized program, so there is no comparison with anyone else, and no one is considered a dummy. Many of our children have their first experience that learning is fun, and they actually get enthusiastic about their school work for the first time in their life."

In addition to Crossroads residents and the Pothaar family, children from four other Harcourt area families now attend the Harcourt Christian School. The cost is $40 per month per child, and this money goes almost entirely toward the cost of curriculum materials. Don and Debbie Waterhouse, with Jake Pothaar, serve as unpaid monitors in the classroom.

While the Waterhouses are convinced that the A.C.E. program provides a much better option for their children than the public school system, they have several criticisms of the program. The A.C.E. curriculum is very regimented, and it places great emphasis on personal success and accomplishment. A fundamentalist approach to the Christian faith comes through in the learning materials, and, from their own experience in the social sciences, the Waterhouses have easily detected the use of a behaviour modification approach in the A.C.E. materials. All of these criticisms and reservations have meant that the Waterhouses are not enthusiastic about promoting the A.C.E. brand of Christian education in their area. However true all of these observations may be, there is no denying the positive effects of the A.C.E. school on the children at Highland Crossroads. The social workers responsible for the children have recognized this, and the A.C.E. tuition costs are now paid by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. In fact, the staff at Highland Crossroads has been asked to make a new, more realistic cost assessment of the total program offered in their group home, to allow for additional government funding.

My story stops here, but the involvement of this small Christian community certainly does not. The Waterhouses are very involved in the pro-life movement, and they are attempting to have their residence serve as the crisis pregnancy shelter in their area. When I visited with them in August, most Crossroads residents were away at summer camp, and this gave them time to campaign vigorously for the Family Coalition Party, which ran a candidate in their area during Ontario's recent provincial election. It was apparent to me that for these Christians, service to Christ was for all of life. That such fruit could spring from roots so different from my own as far as traditions are concerned, was to me a welcome confirmation of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Ron Rupke is an agent for the Christian Labour Association of Canada. He and Margaret and children live in Woodbridge, Ontario.

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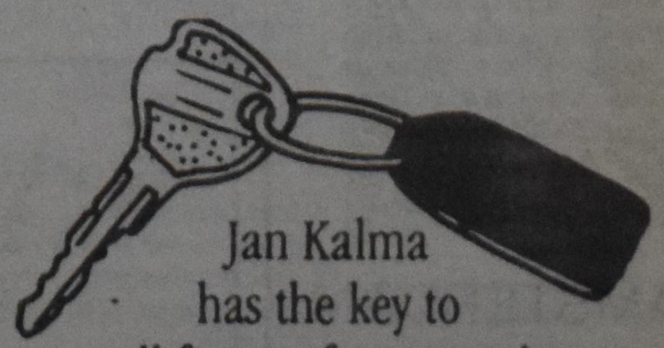

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Classified Rates

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Obituaries $30.00
Notes of thanks $21.00
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All other one-column classified advertisements: $7.50 per column inch with a minimum of $10. For letter under file number, $10 extra. Photos: $7.50 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more.) Calvinist Contact will not be responsible for any errors due to hand-written or phoned-in advertisements.

NOTE: Newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in Calvinist Contact will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only $10! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose $10 and the couple's future address.

Note our new address: Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd., 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9

Thanks

DEELSTRA: Thank you Lord for all your love and blessings. Thank you children and grandchildren who organized such a special day for us on Oct. 7, the day we celebrated 55 years of being together. Thank you relatives and friends from near and far for so many cards, flowers and presents.
Taede and Aukje Deelstra, Wyoming, Ont.

Births

MOBACH (Baker): "The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all He has made." (Psalm 145:13)
Martin and Sandra celebrate God's creation of THEODORE MARTIN, born on Sept. 25, 1987, weighing 8 lbs. He is warmly welcomed by his sister Janina. Theodore is the seventh grandchild for both Horace and Janice Baker of Sarnia, Ont., and Daniel and Eleonora Mobach of Oshawa, Ont. He is the 10th great-grandchild for Mrs. Susan Greidanus of Edmonton, Alta.
Home address: P.O. Box 688, Palmerston, ON N0G 2P0

Anniversaries

Weston Exeter
1962 November 24 1987
"But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15)
We give thanks to the Lord as we hope to celebrate the 25th anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

HAROLD and LIDA DE VRIES
(nee Ponsen)

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless them in the years to come.
Love and congratulations from your children:
Ron & Monique; Amanda, Shawn — London, Ont.
Tim — Brampton, Ont.
Open house will be held, D.V., Saturday, Nov. 28, 1987, from 2-5 p.m., at their home.
Home address: 75 Thames Rd. West, P.O. Box 268, Exeter, ON N0M 1S0
Phone: 519-235-0941.

Durham Region Right to Life Association has audio and video materials as well as speakers available for students, teachers, clubs and churches, etc. For info. (416) 668-7911.

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Pieter and Florence Veenstra (nee vanderGraaf) who will celebrate their 50th anniversary, D.V., on Dec. 2, 1987.

1937 1987
The Lord willing, we will celebrate with our aunt and uncle their 50th wedding anniversary, on Dec. 9, 1987,

BERTHA and GERRIT
VANDER MAAS

We thank the Lord for their love in our lives:
Louie & Vena Vander Maas — England
Bob & Ina Vander Maas — Edmonton
June & Jack Smith — Edmonton
Rita & Harry Williamson — Edmonton
Jenny & Bill Hofstede — Edmonton
Nelly & Walter Eyk — Calgary
Willy & Cor Abma — Leduc
and all of our children.
Open house will be at the Third Chr. Ref. Church, Edmonton, Alta. 14323-107 A Ave., on Dec. 10, 1987, 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Obituaries

The Lord in his wisdom took home for eternity, his beloved child, our friend,

FEDDE DE JONG

at the age of 83.
His faith in the Lord became reality. May the Lord grant his sustaining grace and comfort to Clara, her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
In remembrance:
Dick & Tina Hoekstra
Art & Betty Veenbaas
John & Siene Lindeboom
Alie Krieft
Angnesje Van Veller
Casey & Gertrude De Jong
Sarnia, Ont., Nov. 1, 1987

Suddenly the Lord took to himself our beloved husband, father, stepfather, grandfather and great-grandfather,

JACOB HOFSTEE

at the age of 76.
Predeceased in 1970 by his first wife, Adriaantje Spiering.
Jean Hofstee — St. Thomas, Ont.
Children:
John & Beatrix Hofstee — Listowel, Ont.
Arie & Jeanne Hofstee — St. Thomas, Ont.
Jacob & Denise Hofstee — Cornwall, Ont.
Anthonie & Anna Hofstee — St. Thomas, Ont.
Step-children:
Ronald Park — Tillsonburg, Ont.
Norman Park — London, Ont.
Joan & David Klachan — Aylmer, Ont.
Doug Park — London, Ont.
13 grandchildren, one great-granddaughter.
Nov. 2, 1987.
32 Barwick St., St. Thomas, ON N5P 1T8

Anniversaries

Franeker St. Catharines,
(Fr.) Ont.
1937 December 2 1987
"May the favour of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us — yes, establish the work of our hands." (Ps. 90:17)
The Lord heard their prayer and showed his faithfulness as they celebrate his good gifts in 50 years of marriage.

PIETER and FLORENCE
VEENSTRA
(nee vanderGraaf)

will celebrate with their children, grandchildren and friends at an open house at the Maranatha CRC in St. Catharines on Saturday, Dec. 5, between 2:30 and 5:00 p.m.
Our warmest congratulations to Dad and Mom, Pake and Beppe from:
Ted & Tina Veenstra — St. Catharines, Ont.
Dorothy & Rien Keyzer — Zeist, The Netherlands
John & Lise Veenstra — Mississauga, Ont.
Jack & Ike Veenstra — Drayton, Ont.
Fred & Hazel Veenstra — Owen Sound, Ont.
Bill & Lucy Veenstra — Clarkson, Ont.
and 35 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.
Present address: Apt. 105, Building A, Sunset Homes, 2 White St., St. Catharines, ON L2N 1Z2
Best wishes only.

Obituaries

The consistory and congregation of the Maranatha CRC of Woodbridge, Ont., express their Christian love and sympathy to Mrs. Margaret Vander Kuur, and the entire family, in the death of her husband,

KLAAS VANDER KUUR

on Monday, Nov. 2.
We thank the Lord for the testimony of this humble servant. It is our prayer that our heavenly Father will comfort and sustain each member of the family in this time of loss.

"Safe in the arms of Jesus." (Psalter Hymnal #408)
The Lord in his infinite wisdom took home his faithful child after a courageous battle with cancer,

KLAAS VANDER KUUR

age 65.
His loving wife and children:
Margaret Vander Kuur (nee Bylsma)
Bertha & Paul Walhout
Tiny & Bill Dikschei
Janet & John Koerssen
and 15 grandchildren.
Home address: 27 James St., Woodbridge, ON L4L 1X6.

Anniversaries

1937 1987
"Now thank we all our God ...."
Our parents,

COR and BEP AAY

will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on Saturday, Nov. 28, 1987. A reception will be held in their honour at the Zion Chr. Ref. Church, 409 Adelaide St., Oshawa, 2-5 p.m. Come and celebrate with us!
Congratulations Mom and Dad!
With much love and gratitude from your children and grandchildren:
Nettie & Fred — Escondido, Calif.
Ken & Mary — Toronto, Ont.
Henk & Chris — Grand Rapids, Mich.
Maggie & Bill — Burlington, Ont.

Obituaries

"If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." (Romans 14:8)
On Saturday, Oct. 31, 1987, the Lord took home unto himself our beloved son, brother, brother-in-law and uncle,

HARRY WIERSMA

In his 45th year.
Loving parents:
Idso & Berendtje Wiersma — St. Catharines
Brothers and sisters:
Minne & Nancy Wiersma — Michelle, Paul — Bowmanville
Alex & Joyce Wiersma; Mark, Ria, Darryn — Lacombe, Alta.
Idso & Anne Wiersma; Julie, Erica, Christopher, David — Niagara-on-the-Lake
Jenny & John Glasbergen; Kenneth, Randall, Selena — Burlington
Alice & Elzo deHaan; Darryl, Bradley, Charlene — Burlington
Henry & Johanna Wiersma; Janita, Jullian, Daniel — Cobourg
Jake & Judy Wiersma; Jessica, Amanda — Chatham
Beatrice & Leo Droppert; Jason, Jeremy, Timothy, Joshua — Wainfleet
We pray that the Lord may continue to strengthen Lucy and her children.

For Sale

Pipe organ for sale, eight ranks/pedal, solid oak case, Swiss builder (Wolff). Call Alan Stewart, (416) 232-2322, Toronto.

The Thunder Bay Christian School **25th Anniversary Book** is now available. Send your name, address, and a cheque for $10, payable to TBCS Anniversary Committee," to: Thunder Bay Christian School, Anniversary Committee, R.R.#2, Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V1

Personals

Het Consulaat-Generaal zou gaarne in contact willen komen met de navolgende personen:
BAKKER, Jelle, geboren op 1 oktober 1922, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Terschellingstraat 38, Den Haag, naar Canada vertrokken op 25 september 1952.
VAN DE BELD, W.J.A., geboren op 27 november 1922, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: G. Doustraat 194 1A, Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 13 juni 1957.
BLANKERT, J.C., geboren op 26 juli 1922, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: K1. Merwede 19, Diemen, naar Canada vertrokken op 12 november 1958.
VAN EIJK, Willem, geboren op 25 augustus 1922, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Bilderdijkstraat 18, Gouda, naar Canada vertrokken op 16 juni 1958.
VAN GELDEREN, P., geboren op 5 februari 1923, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Meeldijk, Spijkenisse, naar Canada vertrokken op 23 mei 1967.
VAN DER KRAATS, Hendrikus, geboren op 2 oktober 1922, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Gildestraat 2, Vught, naar Canada vertrokken op 17 juli 1953.
LEEMBURG, Sjoerd, geboren op 21 februari 1905, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: van Nijenrodestraat 5, Den Haag, naar Canada vertrokken op 3 juni 1958.
VAN LUNENBURG, Gerhardus Hendricus, geboren op 11 december 1922 te Haarlem, laatste woonplaats in Nederland: Haarlem, naar Canada vertrokken op 30 maart 1954.
PADBERG, Albertus M., geboren op 14 maart 1909, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Bultsweg 61, Enschede, naar Canada vertrokken op 1 april 1959.
ROBLES, Abraham gehuwd met Jeanette HEERTJE, beiden bewoond hebbende te Toronto op 44 Walner Road. Dit adres dateert van 1953.
DE RUITER, Nicolaas Maurits en Louis Leonardus, beiden geboren te Den Haag resp. op 12 mei 1945 en 26 april 1947. Naar Canada vertrokken op 1 mei 1958.

Consulaat Generaal der Nederlanden
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Real Estate

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Classifieds

Help Wanted

Secretary/Receptionist required full-time. Excellent typing and English skills required. Send resume to: Paideia Press Ltd., P.O. Box 1000, Jordan Station, ON L0R 1S0; (416) 562-5719.

Single mother of 2 small children seeks live-in childcare to enable her to work 12 hour days and nights. Also, works every other weekend. Call (519) 245-2437.

Teachers

GEORGETOWN: The Georgetown District Chr. School is in need of a **primary teacher** from Jan. 4 — June 30, 1988. Applicants are invited to send their resume to: Mr. George Petrusma, Principal, R.R.1, Georgetown, ON L7G 4S4. Phone: (416) 877-4221.

For Rent

Nearly new bungalow, 10 km east of **Ottawa.** Electric heat, central vac., double garage, 6 appliances. Transportation to Chr. elementary and high schools. Call Basil Staal, (613) 835-2226.

Florida-Gulf of Mexico: 2-bedroom condo, ideal family place in Indian Rocks, very private, heated pool, across road from beach. Available until Jan. 23, 1988. Rent rates U.S. $350-500 per week. Phone Toronto: 226-1137 or 785-0794.

Why not place an ad in Calvinist Contact?

Help Wanted

Director/Therapist

to assume responsibility for managing a Christian counselling agency. A Master's level degree or better in a social science is desired. Clinical experience in the provision of individual, marital and family therapy is essential. Experience working with a Board of Directors and in community relations is also preferred though not essential. Please submit a written resume as well as a statement outlining how you integrate your faith with your therapy, by December 31, 1987, to:

Dick Farenhorst, Ph.D.
201 - 14980 - 104 Ave., Surrey, B.C. V3R 1M9
Location: Prince George, British Columbia

The Ontario Christian School Teachers' Association (OCSTA)

invites applications for the position of

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In co-operation with the OCSTA Board of Directors the Executive Director will:

— manage the daily business needs of the 650 association members
— develop and supervise professional growth opportunities for the OCSTA membership
— initiate discussions and provide opportunities for planning and implementing matters relevant to the future direction of the Christian school movement in Ontario and other provinces served by OCSTA
— serve as liaison for the OCSTA membership to CSI, the OACSS, the OCSAA, the Ministry of Education and related organizations.

The applicant should be a professional educator certified and qualified to teach in and/or administer Christian schools in Ontario. Preferential consideration will be given to applicants with advanced degrees and/or a demonstrated ability to be involved in Christian education in Ontario. The position is full-time commencing August 1, 1988. Salary and benefits commensurate with education and experience. Applications will be accepted until November 30, 1987.

Direct your application or inquiries to:
"Search Committee, OCSTA"
c/o Hank Hultink
547 West Fifth St., Hamilton, ON L9C 3P7
Phone: 1-416-388-2645

Teachers

Lacombe Christian School

is searching for a

principal

for the 1988/89 school year.

- Position involves some teaching
- A CSI school — grades K-9
- Interdenominational
- Current enrolment 274
- 13 full-time; 3 part-time teaching staff
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For information contact:
Jack Oudman
R.R.3, Lacombe, AB T0C 1S0
Phone: (403) 782-2667

Calgary Christian School

in Calgary, Alberta

is seeking a

teacher/principal

for the 88/89 term.

The established modern school facility has a total enrolment of 400 students (ECS through Grade 12) and a staff of 24.

Candidates should have three year prior principal experience with demonstrated administrative skills, and ability to motivate people, have a vision for Christian education and be able to communicate that in the Christian and greater community.

Depending on the candidate and circumstances, longer contract terms are possible. Interested candidates should send their resume to:

Bert Hagens
3135 - 47 St. S.W.
Calgary, Alta., Canada, T3E 3X2
and/or phone (403) 246-3476

Attention: Business Community Insert YOUR message in our special 1987 Christmas issue

Calvinist Contact is planning a special 1987 Christmas issue.

Date of this issue will be **December 4.** It will be mailed to our regular subscribers on **December 1.**

In addition, we plan to distribute thousands of copies of the Christmas issue to Reformed Christians across the continent free of charge.

To print so many extra copies costs money. We are appealing to the business community, among others, to help us out.

Please do not wait. Take a moment to complete and return the attached coupon.

Deadline for advertisements in the Christmas issue is November 20!!!

Check one

1) Business Card — Size about 3" x 1¾"
Cost: $75

2) 1/8 Page — Size 5" x 3½"
Cost: $125

3) 1/4 Page — Size 5" x 7½"
Cost: $250

4) Half Page — Size 10" x 7½"
Cost: $500

5) Full Page — Size 10" x 15"
Cost: $900

6) Sponsorship Advertising
I do not wish to place my own ad, but will gladly sponsor a Christian organization advertisement. I understand *Calvinist Contact* will obtain copy from the organization indicated.

I wish to sponsor an ad for _____

_____

This ad should be of the size ____ full-page $900
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____ card $75

Please enclose your ad copy with this coupon.

_____ I enclose payment _____ Please bill me

Sender: (*Please print*)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov. _____ Code _____

Return by November 20 to: Calvinist Contact
4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9

Events/Books

Social attitudes

Women as people

Are Women Human? by Dorothy L. Sayers. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1971. Paperback, 47 pages, $4.25. Reviewed by Johanna Peetoom, North York, Ontario.

This book is an address given by Sayers to a Women's Society in 1938. It is so contemporary, however, that it is embarrassing: we have made so little progress. Sayers' premise is that women and men are human beings and must be treated as much more alike than different. As creatures created in God's image we must be true to that image and not to the differences between the sexes.

Dorothy L. Sayers is perhaps better known as a writer of excellent detective novels than as a feminist. In fact, she would deny being a feminist. Mary McDermott Shideler, in her introduction to *Are Women Human?*, says that the liberation of women was not a cause Sayers espoused, but a way of life that she practised on the premise that male and female are adjectives qualifying the noun "human being," and that the substantive governs the modifier. Sayers' Christian views of work as described in the introduction touch a chord in Calvinists: "... in work which is creative, human nature most nearly approaches its Creator ... We are known by our work, as God is known by his."

Sayers knows how to put her sense of humour to good use. With humour she describes "what it would be like for a man if he were unrelentingly assessed in terms of his maleness"; if everything he wore, said or did had to be justified by reference to female approval. "To be compelled to regard himself not as a member of society, but merely as a virile member of society." The list of considerations goes on and on, including press, pulpit, education, sexuality and work.

Sayers points out that women are first of all human beings and, therefore, "... more like men than anything else in the world." She introduces the terms *Vir*, *Femina* and *Homo*. *Vir* is male and *Femina* is female, but *Homo* is male and female. The mistake commonly made is that man is always dealt with as Homo *and* Vir, but woman only as Femina.

Sayers ends the book by using Jesus as an example of someone who treated women as human beings ("... nobody could possibly guess from the words and deeds of Jesus that there was anything 'funny' about woman's nature...."), and adds that his attitude has not prevailed.

It is well worth the effort to read this book. It addresses maleness and femaleness in a different, fresh and above all biblical way.

Have you moved? Send your new address to: Calvinist Contact so we can keep our files up to date!

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Accepted

— to Brockville, Ont., Cand. Henry Kranenburg.

Classis meetings

— **Classis Hamilton** will meet in regular session on Jan. 20, 1988, at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. All agenda materials should reach the stated clerk by Dec. 9, 1987.

Richard Stienstra, SC

— **Classis Huron:** Jan. 13, Drayton, Ont. CRC.

— **Classis Niagara:** Jan. 20, Bethany CRC, Fenwick, Ont.

— **Classis Toronto:** Jan. 28, Newmarket, Ont. CRC.

ISRAEL & GREECE

with Dr. R. Kooistra

Departure: April 28, 1988 — 16 day tour

You are invited to join Dr. and Mrs. Remkes Kooistra on this exciting tour of Israel and Greece. They will visit all the biblical highlights in Israel, then cross over to Greece to enjoy both ancient history and Pauline missionary journey.

If you are interested, contact:

Dr. Remkes Kooistra
453 Albert St., #12
Waterloo, ON N2L 5A7
Ph: 1-519-885-6105

A Valentine Travel Your Special

Extend your Christmas Wishes through Calvinist Contact.

Mailing Christmas cards to all your family and friends can be expensive. Yet Christmas is an extra-special time to greet one another and share in the celebration of our Saviour's birth.

Calvinist Contact is pleased to offer you the opportunity to extend Christmas Wishes in our special Christmas Issue, December 4. (Published early to insure readers across the country receive it on time)

As well as reaching our regular subscribers, thousands of additional copies will be sent to the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada.

The cost of placing this ad is $15. *Calvinist Contact* should receive your greeting and cheque before November 23.

Mail to:
Calvinist Contact
Christmas Greetings
4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9

SAMPLE:

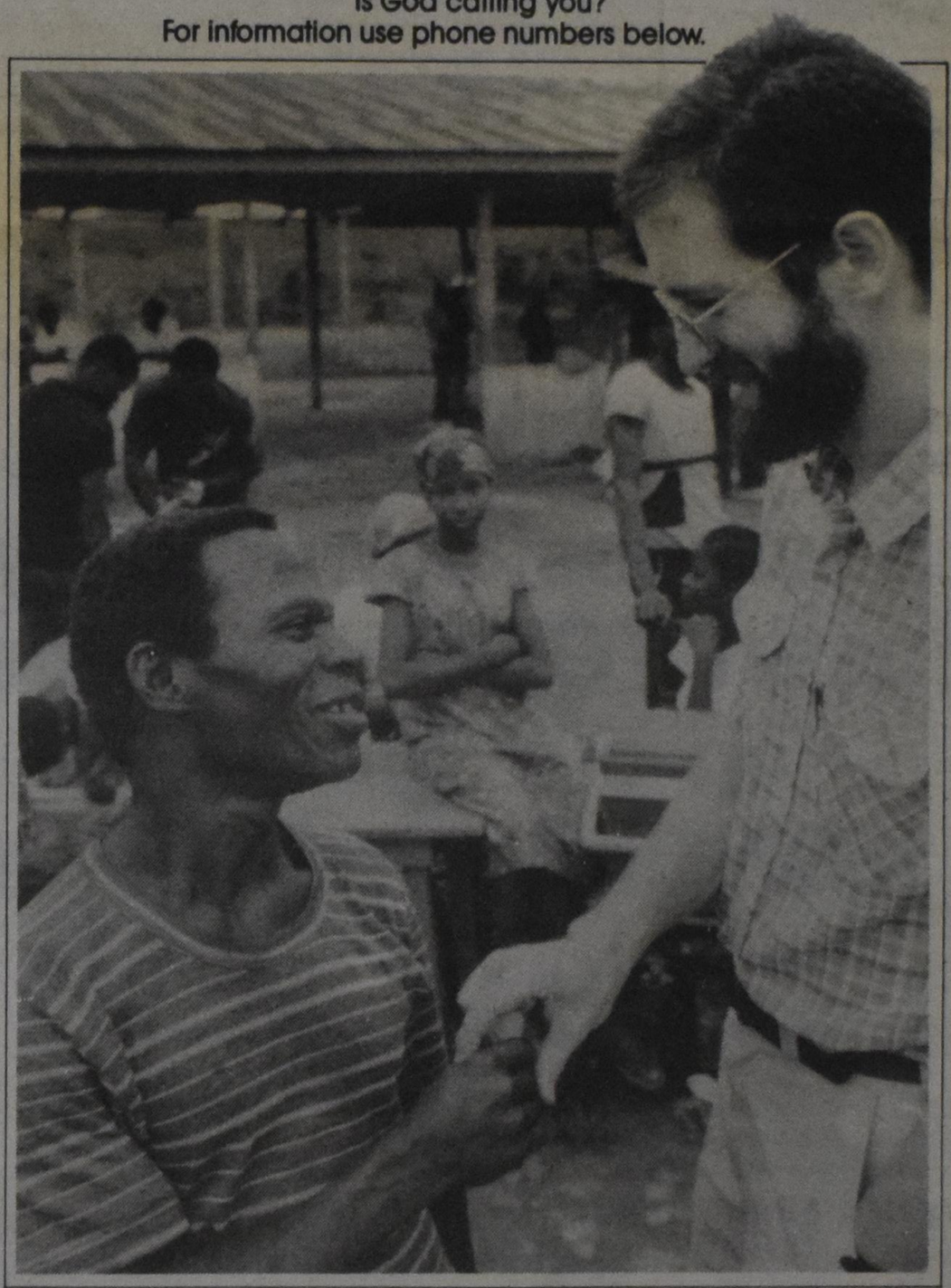
VAN DER: We wish all our family and friends a blessed Christmas and God's peace in the New Year. Jane, Tom, Sally and Peter Van Der.

THANK GOD

for 123* families who have committed themselves to serving by reaching way out.

THEY COVET YOUR PRAYERS.

*There are 25 additional open positions.
Is God calling you?
For information use phone numbers below.



Watch your mailbox for the
1988 World Missions Centennial Calendar

Let's Celebrate
1888-1988: A Century of Missions

Our theme:
LET THE WHOLE WORLD KNOW!

Christian Reformed World Missions
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Do you enjoy the outdoors? Consider counselling children in the beautiful Kawarthas or instructing them in an activity in which you are proficient. Camp KE-MON-OYA is now accepting applications for activity counsellors (minimum age 18 years) in:

swimming	canoeing	sailing
boardsailing	snorkelling	campcraft
sports	arts & crafts	drama
leathercraft	nature	

and volunteer cabin counsellors (18 years and older).
Mom and Dad — a great opportunity to spend 2 or more weeks in camp helping kids become the person the Lord wants them to be while your own child is enjoying the outdoors. Also openings for a nurse, a campcook, kitchen helpers, a maintenance supervisor and maintenance helpers.

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[ ] details about volunteer program

[ ] more info. about children's summer camp

Date:

Please mail to:

Name _____

Address _____

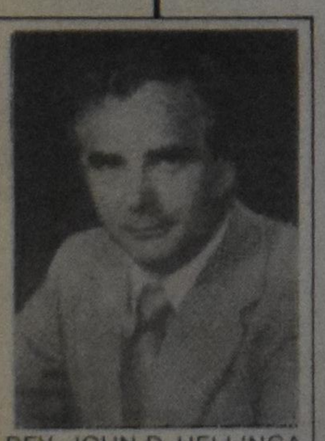
Staff position as _____

Tel. # _____

C.C.E.F.

12th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE C.C.E.F. 12th ANNIVERSARY PUBLIC CHRISTIAN EDUCATIONAL RALLY



REV. JOHN D. HELLINGA

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1987

FEATURING: A MASS CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHOIR FROM LAMBTON CHRISTIAN HIGH, SARNIA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, JOHN KNOX CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, WYOMING, AND WALLACEBURG CHRISTIAN SCHOOL.

CONDUCTOR — JANETTE WINTER-WASSINK
PIANIST — DEBBIE VAN EGMOND
ORGANIST — EDITH VANDEN BURG

SPEAKER: REV. JOHN D. HELLINGA, PASTOR, CALVIN C.R.C., OAKLAWN, ILLINOIS.

TOPIC: *"WORKERS WITHOUT TOOLS"- "SCHOOLS WITHOUT TEXTBOOKS"*

WE PROMISE YOU A WONDERFUL EVENING OF PRAISE and CELEBRATIONS. COME WITH THE ENTIRE FAMILY — BUT COME EARLY!

PLACE: FIRST CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH, 787 MURPHY ROAD, SARNIA, ONTARIO

TIME: 8:00 P.M. SHARP!

DATE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1987

SEE YOU THERE!

A FREE WILL OFFERING WILL BE TAKEN DURING THE PROGRAM FOR CHRISTIAN TEXTBOOK DEVELOPMENT.

THIS RALLY IS CO-SPONSORED BY SARNIA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THEIR 30TH ANNIVERSARY AND THE AREA CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS, WYOMING, WALLACEBURG, AND LAMBTON CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL.

FOUNDED 1975

CANADIAN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOUNDATION, INC.

Fred R. Vander Velde, Executive Director
2621 Cavendish Drive, Burlington, Ontario, Canada L7P 3W6
(416) 336-5619

Calendar of Events

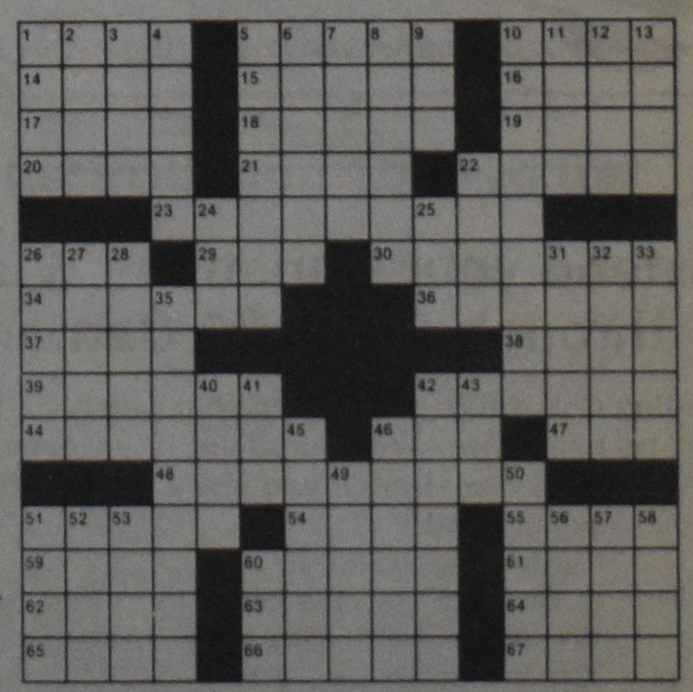
Nov. 21	Bazaar at Calvin Memorial Chr. School, Scott St., **St. Catharines,** Ont. Lunch from 12 to 1:30 p.m. Supper from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Nov. 21	Back to God Hour Rally at 8 p.m. in St. George's Anglican Church, **Guelph,** Ont. Speaker: Rev. Bassam Madany. Music: Leendert Kooij's O.C.M.A. with Andre Knevel at the organ.
Nov. 21	Arts & Crafts Festival at TDCH, **Woodbridge,** Ont.
Nov. 23-26	Christian Counselling Service of S.W. Ontario (Classis Chatham) organizational membership meetings: **Nov. 23,** 8 p.m. in First CRC, **London,** Ont.; Nov. 25, 8 p.m., First CRC, **Sarnia,** Ont.; **Nov. 26,** 8 p.m., Calvary CRC, **Chatham,** Ont.
Nov. 25	CPJ meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Redeemer Chr. High school, **Ottawa,** Ont. Speaker: Ian Shugart on day-care legislation. Everyone welcome. For info. call Christina Pleizier at (613) 835-2293.
Nov. 25	RCBPA Smithville Chapter. Organizational meeting at 7:30 p.m. at The Old Farm Inn, **Smithville,** Ont. Speaker: W. Smouter. For info. call (416) 957-7766 or 524-1203.
Nov. 28	Organ Concert at Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby,** Ont. at 8 p.m. featuring organist Andre Knevel and Heather Kikkert, soprano. Free will offering.
Dec. 2	RCBPA Hamilton Chapter breakfast meeting at 7 a.m. at Holiday Inn, **Burlington,** Ont. Speaker: A. Schaafsma. For reservations call (416) 524-1203.
Dec. 2	"Farming in New Directions" — CFFO Annual Convention and Banquet at Italian Canadian Club of **Guelph.** Convention $15; banquet $15 (student rates available). For info. and registration (deadline noon, Nov. 27) call (519) 837-1620.
Dec. 3	CCEF 12th Anniversary Rally in First Chr. Ref. Church, **Sarnia,** Ont. Co-sponsored by Sarnia Chr. School (in conjunction with its 30th anniversary) and other area-Christian schools. Feature speaker: Rev. John D. Hellinga.
Dec. 5	Organ concert and hymn sing with organist Andre Knevel, at 8 p.m. in Calvin CRC, Hwy. 5, **Dundas,** Ont.
Dec. 5	Annual giant bazaar and auction at Knox Christian School, Scugog Rd., **Bowmanville,** Ont. Everyone welcome.
Dec. 5	Handel's "Messiah" presented by "Laudate Dominum Choir" with organist Dick DeJonge at 8 p.m. in St. Andrew's United Church, **Chatham,** Ont.
Dec. 9	Special organ recital by John W. Vandertuin at 8 p.m. in the concert hall of W. Ross MacDonald School, **Brantford,** Ont.
Dec. 11	Christmas concert by band "Holland's Glory" with Andre Knevel at the organ at 8 p.m. in Covenant CRC, **St. Catharines,** Ont. Free will offering. Refreshments. Bring a friend!
Dec. 11	Organ and trumpet concert at 8 p.m. in Clarkson CRC, **Mississauga,** Ont., featuring organist Jan Overduin of Sir Wilfred Laurier's Faculty of Music, and trumpet virtuoso Eric Schultz of The University of Western Ontario. Tickets $8.00 adults, $4.00 seniors/students. For reservations call (416) 227-9112 or 823-2956.

Advertising deadlines

Dated	Mailed	Two column ad deadline	Classified deadline
Fri.Nov.27	Tues.Nov.24	Wed.Nov. 18-8:30a.m.	Thurs.Nov.19-8:30a.m.
Fri.Dec.4	Tues.Dec.1	Wed.Nov.25-8:30a.m.	Thurs.Nov.26-8:30a.m.
Fri.Dec.11	Tues.Dec.8	Wed.Dec.2-8:30a.m.	Thurs.Dec.3-8:30a.m.

Weekly Crossword

by Fran Ragus



ACROSS
1 Packs tightly
5 Vary within limits
10 Stinger
14 Chills and fever
15 Zola
16 Water jar
17 Dole
18 Important
19 Maraud
20 Reproduced
21 Religious image
22 "Golden Boy" dramatist
23 "— golden"
26 Sunday: abbr.
29 Legal point
30 Festival times
34 Askew
36 Warm over
37 Oriental nurse
38 Jason's ship
39 Mignonette
42 Profession
44 Ambience
46 Hood's weapon
47 Netherlands city
48 "— is bliss"
51 Stuffs
54 Squealed
55 River craft
59 "Clair de —"
60 Stage whisper
61 Century plant
62 It. wine region
63 Penny-pincher
64 Antitoxins
65 Affirmatives
66 Imitators
67 Student's obstacle

DOWN
1 Sidepiece for a door
2 Ripening factor
3 Speechless
4 Caraway and poppy
5 Vilified
6 Priestly vestments
7 Gaseous element
8 Once-over
9 Scaleless fish
10 "— weep and tears that speak" (Cowley)
11 Wings
12 Aperture
13 Tablets
22 Belg. river
24 Wrath
25 Corn unit
26 Asterisks
27 Anouk —
28 Explosion
31 Spectral
32 Fumed
33 Reserve
35 "— out of joint" ("Hamlet")
40 Excavations
41 Jillian of TV
42 Food troughs
43 Common abbr.
45 Dirt
46 Glance
49 Uplift
50 Remove
51 Feet of —
52 Artifice
53 Theater gp.
56 Author Haley
57 "It's time — change" (Dewey)
58 Sports group
60 Drs.' gp.

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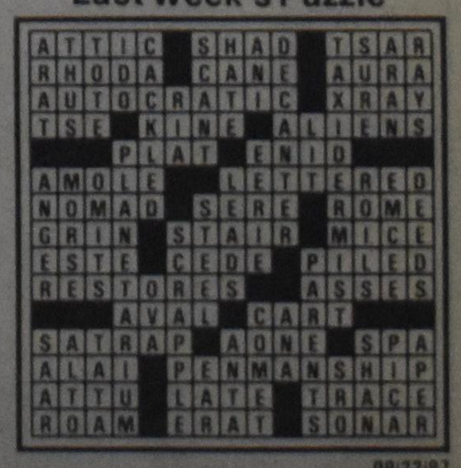
Last Week's Puzzle



09/22/87

Dutch

Persoverzicht

Carl D. Tuyl

Het nationale debat over het handelsverdrag met de U.S. is nu in het "nietes-welles-stadium." Kabinetministers reizen het land rond, het "welles" verkondigend met het elan van handelsreizigers die kommissie krijgen. Aan de andere kant zijn er de vakorganizaties en drie provinciale premiers die met evenveel overtuiging het "nietes" vertegenwoordigen. En dit gebeurt allemaal terwijl eigenlijk nog niemand het naadje van de kous weet.

★★★★

Politieke partijen in ons land beleven een moeilijke tijd. In de Liberale Partij broeit het nog erger dan in een hooiberg die bijna in brand staat. De Parti Quebecois lijdt aan innerlijke verdeeldheid en Johnson werd tot aftreden gedwongen. De Konservatieven, alhoewel aan de macht, kunnen zich niet in populariteit verheugen en kunnen zelfs de leden van hun eigen fraktie nauwelijks in het gareel houden. Zelfs Edele Eduard heeft te kampen met strijd onder de solidaire broederschap.

★★★★

De Minister van Justitie heeft in de Kamer een wetsontwerp geïntroduceerd waarbij van misdadigers, waar mogelijk, geëist zou worden dat zij hun slachtoffers financieel zouden vergoeden. Dat is tenminste een stap in de goede richting.

★★★★

De Eerste Kamer moest beslissen of de zogenaamde medicijnwet (U kent die wet zo langzamerhand wel) goedgekeurd zou worden of niet. Inplaats van een beslissing te maken besloten de senatoren maar om met vakantie te gaan. Dit natuurlijk in navolging van de Tweede Kamer-leden die ook Ottawa hebben verlaten. Monsieur Mulroney rust in het zwoele klimaat van Florida's stranden. Intussen zit Konsumentenminister Harvie André, die de medicijnen wet door het maas van Kamer-protokol zou leiden, nog steeds met lege handen en hoge bloeddruk van ergernis.

★★★★

Onze nationale luchtvaartmaatschappij is deze dagen zo betrouwbaar als ijs van één nacht: grondpersoneel kan ieder ogenblik in staking gaan. In het boek waar het aantal stakingen over de wereld wordt bijgehouden moet Canada tenminste een eervolle vermelding hebben.

★★★★

Soms maken mensen de vergissing om het beeld op de T.V. te verwarren met de realiteit. U kent de reklame van de American Express. Het is dat kaartje, dat je nooit thuis moet laten volgens de zegslieden van die maatschappij. De mensen die op de T.V. hun reischeques verliezen of anders kwijt raken ondervinden nog geen vijf minuten onderbreking van hun vakantiereis. Een glimlachende mijnheer geeft ze voordat je "hou-m'n-hart-vast" kunt zeggen het geld terug, vergezeld met de beste wensen voor een prachtige vakantie en een gelukkig leven. Maar toen Marianne Brossier en Charles Moign in Toronto hun cheques kwijt raakten, werd hen op het kantoor van American Express verteld dat, mochten ze hun geld terug krijgen, het wel zes weken zou duren.

★★★★

Berichten over Diana, Princess of Wales en haar echtgenoot zijn nu in de vijfde versnelling. Zelfs ons nationale tijdschrift Maclean moest er nodig een hoofdartikel aan wijden. Intussen was het echtpaar in Duitsland om Engeland te vertegenwoordigen.

★★★★

Volgens niemand anders dan de voormalige U.S. ambassadeur in Ottawa — Paul Robinson — moet Allan Gotlieb, onze ambassadeur in Washington, (beroemd of berucht door de klap die van kust tot kust gehoord werd) zich nogal kritisch over zijn baas, Prime Minister Trudeau, hebben uitgelaten. De hand die voedt wordt vaak gebeten!

★★★★

De wereldpers is nog bezig met de recente toespraak van Gorbachev, waarin hij Sovjet geschiedenis korrigeerde door Stalin in zijn bloedrode hemd te zetten. Uit de tekst van die toespraak poogt men konklusies te trekken over hoe ver Gorbachev durft te gaan, en dus in hoeverre hij er in geslaagd is zijn tegenstanders in het Kremlin te overkomen. De meningen zijn, zoals gewoonlijk, verdeeld. In al dat gepraat over vrijheid in Rusland moeten we maar niet vergeten dat er daar nog broeders en zusters vanwege hun geloof in Christus vervolgd worden. Toch zijn er in het reusachtige Sovjet rijk vandaag naar schatting nog 100 miljoen gelovigen en evangelie-getrouwen.

★★★★

De Ierse republikeinse verzetsbeweging ging wel ver over de streep van menselijkheid, toen een bom tijdens een herdenkingsdienst tot ontploffing werd gebracht. Er vielen veel slachtoffers.

★★★★

En Ds. Falwell heeft zich terug getrokken uit de politieke arena. Eerst al diende hij zijn ontslag in bij de P(ay) T(he) L(ady) en nu wil hij weer helemaal terug op de preekstoel. Hij gaf allerlei hoogdravende redenen voor die beslissing, maar ergens werd ook verklaard dat er geld moest komen omdat zijn T.V. programma in financiële moeilijkheden kwam. Kerk gaan per T.V., tussen twee haakjes, is als vrijen bij korrespondentie; niet je ware!

★★★★

Dames hieromtrent maken zich zorgen over veranderende mode, die de rokken op wil trekken tot waar het nog maar net netjes is. Vooral de kosten daaraan verbonden, veroorzaken vragen naar verantwoordelijke houding ten opzichte van de "mode-diktators."

★★★★

In Texas worden rechters gekozen net als andere politici. Advokaten die voor de rechtbank de zaak van hun klanten moeten behartigen, storten veel geld in de verkiezings-akties van de rechters. Het lijkt me niet dat in Texas Vrouwe Justitia helemaal blind is, niet eens kippig zelfs. Scheel waarschijnlijk!

★★★★

En in Duitsland, het land dat muziek, filosofie en oorlogen exporteert, heeft de wetenschap een belangrijke vondst gedaan. In het één of andere wetenschappelijke instituut heeft men nu met video-toestellen kunnen bewijzen, dat liefde op het eerste gezicht inderdaad mogelijk is. Wist ik al lang, want ik heb het zelf ondervonden. Maar dat is nu eenmaal vaak de taak van de wetenschap: te bewijzen wat iedereen al weet.

★★★★

Er was deze herfst een jubileum dat aan de aandacht ontsnapt is en dat ik hier toch even wil aanhalen. Op 17 september 1637 werd het eerste exemplaar van de Statenbijbel aangeboden aan de Staten-Generaal van de Republiek van de Zeven Provinciën. Die Bijbelvertaling is dus nu 350 jaar oud. Wel iets om even te memoreren, vindt u niet? De zogenaamde October-revolutie in Rusland was zeventig jaar geleden. Twee gebeurtenissen die nog steeds ons leven beïnvloeden.

Carl Tuyl is predikant van de Christian Reformed Church in Kingston, Ontario.

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CREDIT UNION

Hollandse pagina's worden opgeheven in 1989

Het redaktioneel bestuur van *Calvinist Contact* heeft dit jaar een belangrijk besluit genomen op haar vergadering in St. Catharines. Het heeft besloten dat met ingang van 1 april 1989 er geen Hollands gedeelte meer zal zijn in C.C. Dit betekent dat we voor anderhalf jaar voortgaan met Hollandse pagina's. Na die tijd zal het alleen engels zijn.

Het moest er van komen, volgens het bestuur. Het is het onherroepelijke gevolg van een immigratie, die voor de Gereformeerde gemeenschap in Canada zo'n 35 jaar in het verleden ligt. Deze immigratie betekende, dat de meeste leden van deze gemeenschap engels sprekende Canadezen zouden worden. Ook al hebben ze hun eigen scholen opgericht, dat betekende niet dat ze de Hollandse taal of misschien de Hollandse kultuur zouden voortzetten hier in Canada. Het enige wat ze zó hoog schatten dat ze het nooit willen laten gaan is hun geloof en hun visie. Dit willen ze delen met andere Canadezen, en daarmee willen ze van gedachten wisselen met andere Christelijke geloofs-overtuigingen in Canada. *Calvinist Contact* wil zich richten op een gereformeerde visie voor Canada, niet op een geloofsovertuiging met een Hollands smaakje.

In april 1989 zal het vijf jaar geleden zijn, dat er een diskussie gevoerd werd in onze krant over het wel of niet behouden van de Hollandse pagina's. De reaktie die we toen kregen deed ons denken dat het nog een beetje te vroeg was. Nu is het in tussen 35 jaar (voor sommigen 40 jaar) na de immigratie, en het bestuur vond dat er nog maar weinig mensen zijn overgebleven die geen engelse artikelen kunnen lezen.

Een persoon die in 1989 65 jaar is en met pensioen gaat, was in de hoogtijd van de immigratie misschien 30 jaar oud. Zo iemand moet geen moeite hebben om nu engels te lezen. Zelfs een 75-jarige zal een behoorlijke kans gehad hebben om engels te leren. Niet dat het engels hem of haar aan zal spreken zoals de Hollandse taal dat doet. Maar het is voor hen ook geen vréémde taal meer.

Eén van de redenen die nogal zwaar woog bij het bestuur, was het feit dat *Calvinist Contact* een grotere aanslag moet doen op de jongere mensen en op lezers van niet-Hollandse afkomst. Voor hen moeten we de barrikades van het begrip dat we "een Hollands blad zijn" verwijderen.

Er is nog een laatste overweging. Het gebruik van de Hollandse taal onder onze medewerkers en schrijvers gaat hard achteruit. De meesten van hen gebruiken een Nederlands idioom van de veertig- en fijftiger jaren. Engelse zinsneden en woorden vinden hun weg in hun artikels. Behalve "Persoverzicht" van Carl Tuyl, zijn de Hollandse artikels meestal niet aktueel, tenzij we hen overnemen uit een Hollands blad. Het is een eigenaardig, ouderwets gedeelte geworden van de krant, zoiets als de historische kerken in het oosten van Canada — niet veel bezocht.

Het idee van een Hollands invoegblad is overwogen, maar het zou te duur worden en te onpraktisch. Het moderne postsysteem in Canada dat we moeten volgen, maakt dat heel moeilijk. Alhoewel het bestuur bedroefd is over het feit dat sommige oudere lezers dit besluit pijnlijk zullen vinden, heeft het toch besloten om de Gordiaanse knoop van "hoelang zal *Calvinist Contact* het Hollands vol houden?" door te hakken.

We verwachten wel enkele negative reakties op dit besluit. Maar toch hopen we dat de oudere mensen onder ons zullen erkennen dat er een tijd komt in de ontwikkeling van een immigrantenvolk, dat het volop in de Canadese gemeenschap moet staan en volle verantwoordiging moet aanvaarden om een krachtige getuigenis af te leggen, ook op het gebied van de journalistiek.

Moge God het besluit van het bestuur zegenen.

Bert Witvoet,
Eindredakteur

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Alex Grocery	Springdale, Ontario
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WESTERN ONTARIO:

Mike's Meat Market	London, Ontario
DeWaal Imports	London, Ontario
Palmer's Red & White	Shedden, Ontario
The Dutch Store	Clinton, Ontario
Stratford Packers Delicatessen	Stratford, Ontario
Hesselink's	Drayton, Ontario
The Low Land Deli	Woodstock, Ontario
Koopman's Dutch Imports	Ingersoll, Ontario
The Dutch Grocer	Aylmer, Ontario
Van Ryn's Gift Shop	St. Thomas, Ontario
Norwich Delicatessen	Norwich, Ontario
Mike's Delicatessen	Woodstock, Ontario
Schinkle's Meat Mkt.	Chatham, Ontario
Dutch Shop	Sarnia, Ontario
Pop Shop	Sarnia, Ontario
Kitchener Waterloo Dutch Shop	Kitchener, Ontario
Schenks Deli	Essex, Ontario

CENTRAL ONTARIO

Simon De Groot Meat & Deli	Toronto, Ontario
Holland Store	Toronto, Ontario
Niemeyer's Deli	Richmond Hill, Ontario
Edit Deli	Richmond Hill, Ontario
Stouville Deli	Stouville, Ontario
Klein-Horsman Delicatessen	Scarborough, Ontario
Dick's Food	Brampton, Ontario
Dutch Toko	Guelph, Ontario
Taste of Europe	Guelph, Ontario
Holland Shop	Acton, Ontario
Jeanette Deli	Georgetown, Ontario
Moike Min-A-Mart (Holland Christian Homes)	Brampton, Ontario
The Dutch Mill	Mississauga, Ontario
Old Country Deli	Oakville, Ontario
Dutch Store	Milton, Ontario
Ed's Deli	Burlington, Ontario
Dutch Shop	Burlington, Ontario
Dutch Toko	Hamilton, Ontario
The Dutch Shop	Brantford, Ontario
European Deli	Cambridge, Ontario
H de Koning Butcher	Port Dover, Ontario
Wilsonville General Store	Wilsonville, Ontario
Brown Barrel Deli & Gifts	Sheffield, Ontario
Link's Deli	Dundas, Ontario
Touch of Europe	Dundas, Ontario
Ancaster Deli & Gifts	Ancaster, Ontario
Werger	Dunnville, Ontario
Delca	Stoney Creek, Ontario
Dutch Shop	Grimsby, Ontario
IGA	Smithville, Ontario
IGA	Beamsville, Ontario
IGA	Vineland, Ontario
IGA	Cayuga, Ontario
IGA	Hagersville, Ontario
Foodland	Smithville, Ontario
Westside Deli	Port Colborne, Ontario
Hogeterp Meat	Cayuga, Ontario
Andy's Meat	Cayuga, Ontario
John Deli	Welland, Ontario
Fenwick	Fenwick, Ontario
Ridderkhoff	Fenwick, Ontario
Ramakers Dutch Imports Inc.	St. Catharines, Ontario
Stamford Delicatessen	St. Cathannes, Ontario
Stamford Delicatessen	Niagara Falls, Ontario
M.B. Foods Ltd.	Virgil, Ontario

EASTERN ONTARIO

East End Meat	Whitby, Ontario
South Mill	Whitby, Ontario
Whitby Bakery	Whitby, Ontario
Teeninga's Deli	Oshawa, Ontario
Dykstra's Deli	Bowmanville, Ontario
Cobourg Meat Market	Cobourg, Ontario
Brighton Deli	Brighton, Ontario
Keene General Store	Keene, Ontario
Heidi's Deli	Kingston, Ontario
Golden Rooster Deli	Kingston, Ontario
Trenton Spec Deli	Trenton, Ontario
Quinty Deli	Trenton, Ontario
Downtown Deli	Belleville, Ontario
Dutch Groceries Importers	Ottawa, Ontario
Holland Shop	Manotick, Ontario
Wooden Shoe	Renfrew, Ontario
Boers Delicatessen	Brockville, Ontario

NOVA SCOTIA

Bunsmaster	Sydney, Nova Scotia
Co-op	St. Peter's, Nova Scotia
Dutch Canadian Shop	New Minas, Nova Scotia
Ryan's I.G.A.	Truro, Nova Scotia

NEW BRUNSWICK

Holland Food Imports	Fredericton, New Brunswick

P.E.I.

Tony's Deli	Charlottetown, P.E.I.

MANITOBA

Dutch Meat Market	Winnipeg, Manitoba
Bake Oven	Winnipeg, Manitoba

ALBERTA

Dutch Cash & Carry	Calgary, Alberta
Elmwood Meats	Edmonton, Alberta
Wooden Shoe	Lethbridge, Alberta
Dutch Import	Rocky Mountain House, Alberta

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Dieter's Deli	Richmond Vancouver, B.C.
Hollandia Deli	Tsawwassen, B.C.
Peter's Deli	White Rock, B.C.
Carls Meat	Abbotsford, B.C.
Maple Ridge Butcher	Maple Ridge, B.C.
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Books/Meditation

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Philosophy

Thinking about faith

C. Stephen Evans, Philosophy of Religion: Thinking About Faith. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1985. 192 pp., paper, $9.95. Reviewed by Hendrik Hart, Senior Member in Systematic Philosophy, Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.

This is the fourth volume to appear in the InterVarsity Series *Contours of Christian Philosophy,* which is edited by the author of this volume. An editor of a successful series probably takes risks in writing one of the volumes, but in this case the risk was worth it. Evans has contributed greatly to the quality of this InterVarsity project.

What Evans has chosen to do is to deal with topics that are traditionally treated by people in philosophy of religion. He follows that tradition also on taking philosophy of religion to be the "critical reflection on religious *beliefs.*" By this he means rationally determining the right of religion to claim truth for its beliefs. After having set forth what he takes to be his main subject matter, the rest of the book deals with the traditionally treated clusters of beliefs around certain core topics. So the second chapter deals with natural theology, the third with proofs for God's existence, the fourth with evidence that may favour religion and which comes from religious experience, the fifth with revelation and miracles, the sixth with objections to theism from various quarters, the seventh with the special character of religious language, and the eighth and last with religious pluralism. In all cases what he examines is whether Christian faith can reasonably be said to manifest true beliefs in these areas.

Not critical enough

Once you have set yourself on a certain path, it is fair to be evaluated by what you have achieved on that chosen path. You can, of course, invite criticism about the path you took. I would, for example, have liked a little more "critical reflection" on whether or not philosophy of religion should be what it is now. The path Evans chose is a very worn one and it has become boring to many. Not only that, but to my mind it is clearly the path primarily trod because of the rationalist agenda in our culture. For that reason some important items in the contemporary philosophical ferment are assumed without being treated. Truth primarily has to do with the content of propositions, philosophy rightly assumes the role of critical overseer of what people believe, what religion really is we all know and do not need to examine critically, experience is awareness (rather than the sort of thing want ads point to). Given Evans' own intimate knowledge of Kierkegaard, given also the postmodern movement in philosophy, or even the upheaval caused by contemporary American renegades in the analytic tradition (Richard Rorty, Alisdair MacIntyre), one might have thought that a "critical reflection" tradition might have been a little more self-critical. Instead of struggling around the issue of religious belief being less intellectual assent than an action prescriber, Evans might have examined an American pragmatist tradition, now about three generations old, of looking at all beliefs as bases for action which find their truth in the action to which they lead.

Excitement

However, this is meant to be an introductory text. Perhaps Evans rightly thought that on this level the intricate ins and outs of contemporary ferment would have been confusing. Once his choice of approach was made, the project should now be judged on the execution of it. And by those standards the book deserves high marks. It is refreshingly written. The language is understandable, the arguments are clear, the examples are helpful, the tone is inviting, the treatment of opponents is even and fair. This is a pedagogically responsible book. Above all, in spite of the danger that by entering into a long tradition one may be boring, Evans manages to bring passion and tension into the pages of his text. Age-old discussions engage us anew. And it is very clear that in all this Evans is taking his stance in the Christian faith.

So I do not hesitate to congratulate the editor on this series and the author on this volume in the series. And I recommend *Philosophy of Religion* to all who are interested in what most North American intellectuals discuss when they talk about religion. In certain high school courses a good teacher might take his class through this book with success. A venturesome pastor might try the same with his catechumens. Campus pastors should certainly get several copies of the book, one for themselves, some more to hand out to curious students, and perhaps some others for a series of discussions with student groups.

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Wayne Brouwer

Pentecost

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place." **(Acts 2:1)**

Why did Jesus wait another 10 days after his ascension before sending the Holy Spirit to his disciples? For us, the proverb "Out of sight, out of mind" is probably more often true than that other adage: "Absence makes the heart grow fonder."

But certainly not in Jesus' case! Had He not promised: "I am with you always, to the close of the age?" (Matt. 28:20) Hadn't He assured his followers that "where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them?" (Matt. 18:20)

Surely, amid the many grand celebrations the Father had planned to welcome home his Son, there was a moment or two during which Jesus could confirm his love for his people on earth. These were troubling times for the disciples, and they not only deserved his constant attention; they *needed* it in order to survive in a hostile world.

So why the wait?

A "high holiday"

Perhaps the answer can be found in this verse. Jesus waited to send his Holy Spirit until "the day of Pentecost came." Pentecost was one of the three "high holidays" of the Jewish people, a yearly holy event during which every observant Jew would focus thoughts on the providential care of God and the constant need for his blessing. Its importance was even heightened by a legend first spoken by Rabbi El'azar ben Pedath: "Pentecost is the day on which Torah was given." In other words, God first spoke to his people Israel at Mount Sinai on this special day!

But the real significance of Pentecost is seen in the Old Testament commands regarding its celebration. It was supposed to be a special Sabbath — not the normal Saturday event, but a Sunday on which no work was done.

All the people were to assemble at the Temple and bring with them the first sheaf from the fields, produced, according to Deuteronomy 16:9, when the sickle was first put "to the standing grain." This was to be waved before the Lord as an offering (Lev. 23:11), along with two loaves of bread baked from the new grain. (Lev. 23:17) From the realm of animal husbandry, two male lambs were offered. (Lev. 23:12) And during the presentation of these gifts, all the men danced around the altar to the singing of Psalms 113-118.

The beginning of harvest

And now for the theological edge: no harvesting could take place until these first fruits were offered up to God! When he has claimed the first of the grains and flocks, and when his people have acknowledged that he alone can bring in the rest of the harvest, only then can they move out into the fields for the thrill of reaping.

Suddenly it becomes obvious why Jesus waited a few days before sending the Holy Spirit. As the crowds in Jerusalem turned their thoughts to the harvest, God announced the opening of field ready for heaven's reaping. And as God claimed the first 3,000 souls, Jesus' disciples rolled up their sleeves and got down to the serious business of the church. Evangelism's harvest was underway!

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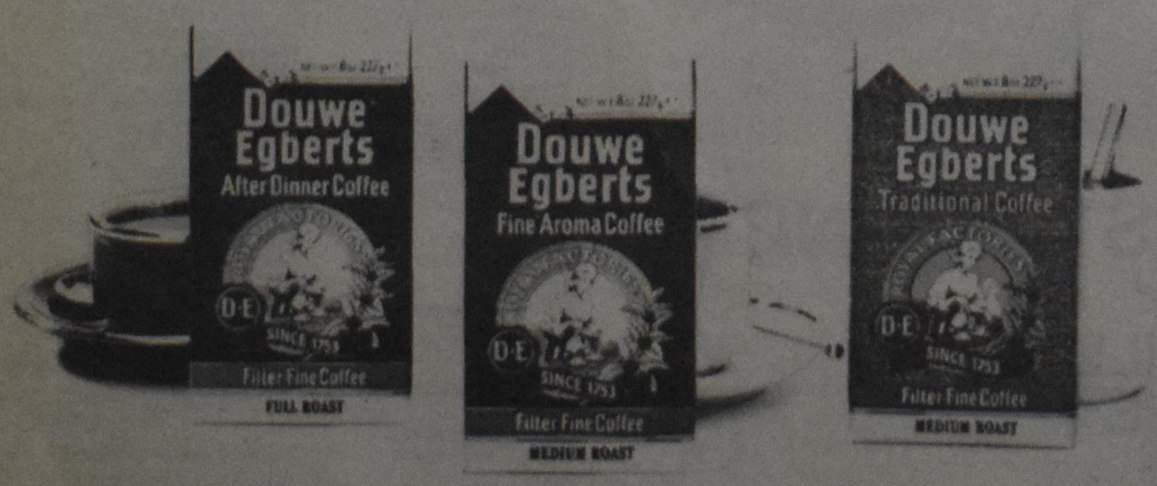

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